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# Ashland Theological Journal

Ashland Theological Seminary

Ashland, Ohio

1999





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**ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL**  
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**David W. Baker, Editor**

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**VOLUME XXXI**

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## **An Encounter With the Healing Christ**

Carol Ball\*

On a dull gray Dallas morning in November 1997 the grand ballroom of the Hyatt Regency hotel was filled with a warm, bright, encompassing light. It wasn't a light produced by the ballroom fixtures, nor one that could be physically seen. Rather it was felt and experienced from within, yet was just as real as if it had been tangible. The unexpected events of that morning could not have been predicted by the more than two thousand American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC) delegates gathered from around the globe at a plenary session of the World Conference. The designated speaker that morning was the President of Compassion International. He was to challenge our thinking on poverty as we wrestled with the conference topic of "Christian Counseling in Partnership with the Local Church and the World Community." After a time of joyful worship and introduction Dr. Wesley K. Stafford stepped to the podium to begin his address. This tall, dignified, impeccably dressed man began to convey his passionate concern for those caught in poverty in the third world. His words were initially forceful, calm and confident. There was a hesitation, followed by a pause and then the unexpected happened. The Spirit of the living God unequivocally moved in our midst.

Somewhat tentatively Wesley began to share at a deeper personal level. He had been unexpectedly summoned to Florida to testify at a Disciplinary Board Hearing of a mission organization held the previous day. He switched gears. He had spent his childhood summers as the "only white boy" in an African village on the Ivory Coast where his father was a missionary. There he felt accepted and that he "belonged." It was in this setting that he came to understand poverty at its grass roots. The rest of the year he attended boarding school with 80 other boys whose parents were in the mission field. Wesley lowered his head, his voice dropped, and his tone changed. At school he and the other boys experienced "every kind of abuse known to man," physical, emotional, and sexual, enduring numerous weekly beatings. He went on to share how he was required to send a weekly letter to his parents saying how "happy" he was, as it was impressed upon him and the other boys the importance of "not jeopardizing the significant work their parents were doing for God." None of them had spoke out until recently. At the previous days' hearing several of the men shared details of their boyhood experiences in the presence of their former abusers. Wesley's voice quivered.

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This had been a wrenching emotional experience for him. He faltered. The accused had flatly denied the testimony of those who had risked breaking their silence. He could not go on speaking. His pain was palpable to each person in the ballroom. There was a hushed silence. Tears quietly ran down this dignified man's face as he stood alone before the microphone.

The hush was broken as a lone female voice rang out from the back of the ballroom. "IT WAS NOT A LIE! WE BELIEVE YOU!" Instinctively and instantaneously the counseling professionals came to life and sprang to their feet. Applause erupted. As the deafening clapping filled the ballroom, Wesley began to sob. The applause escalated. As it went on, and on, Wesley's sobs intensified. Layers of emotional and spiritual pain, buried for years, were released. Gary Collins (at that time the AACC president) moved to the podium. This relatively shorter father-figure stretched his arm around the shoulders of this hurting son, and as silence descended quietly began to pray. Over 2,000 hearts joined in intercession, awed by the gentle presence and tangible power of the Holy Spirit. As the prayer time ended applause erupted again. Wesley hugged Gary, dried his eyes and straightened his shoulders. As he made eye contact with the audience a rueful grin spread across his face and his eyes twinkled. "The Lord knew I needed the help of a counselor today, but did he have to give me 2, 497 of you....?!"

When the laughter died down, Wesley was able to deliver his prepared address with power, vigor and eloquence. As he left the conference later that day his comment to Gary was, "This morning I walked into a ballroom filled with strangers. This afternoon my heart is filled with gratitude as I leave a family." He had encountered the healing Christ when he had least expected it, and was changed by the experience. So were those of us who were present. Our hearts were "strangely warmed." Just as surely as if we had been on the road to Emmaus the living, comforting presence of Jesus had been with us. In the power of the Holy Spirit we had become the Body of Christ to a brother in pain. The next day, we, too, would leave the conference changed by the experience, and, just maybe, be a little less surprised when we unexpectedly encounter the warmth and power of God's light in the dull gray days of our counseling lives!!



## **A PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING OF SUFFERING**

by Emöke Tapolyai\*

### **Death a personal reality**

As I sit by my notes from class I wonder, what is suffering? Loss. What is death? For many it is Tom and Jerry killing each other seventy times in sixty seconds and still living. It is a reality that we do not deal with until we have to.

For me, death and suffering were always a part of life. I remember my great-grandmother who died when I was four years old. Many times I have heard how she begged God for a little girl after the five boys, and how she loved me. I remember looking up at her, her dark, long dress, fragile small body, and sometimes I even think I remember her voice. Yet what is left from her is not memory of knowledge, but of feelings. I feel how she felt for me. I do miss that.

Then, as years passed one of my grandmothers died. She is more vivid in my memory. I recall the big family gathering at her funeral, and I remember crying, hurting though not fully comprehending what was happening.

I was nineteen years old when death, fully dressed, appeared at my door. At that time I was in the United States as a political refugee and was not allowed to go back to Hungary, my home country. My grandfather, with whom I had spent all my childhood summers, died. I talked to him on the phone a day or two before his death. I remember arguing with God: "I believe in miracles! I promise I will do better! Keep him, God! Are You there? Just say You'll do whatever You can!". Oh how I begged Him, and bargained with Him. I went as far as agreeing to his death as long as I had a chance to say good bye. And when my grandfather died, I thought it was because I could not pray well, because I did not pray hard enough. I should have fasted and knelt those days through. I was guilty. I was not allowed to return to bury him, so death was even harder to believe.

Two years later I pleaded for my grandmother's life. I was twenty-one and knew how to pray better, or at least I thought so. She was my role model. She was the one who taught me to pray and praise. I remember the times in my childhood when we knelt together by the bedside and, after finishing all my requests, she would smile and say: "Praise Him now! Thank Him now!" Even now, ten years later, tears are flowing down my face. I did not pray well. I did not fast long enough. I was guilty. She was gone to praise Him face to face. I was not allowed to go back and say good-bye to her. She died alone, and we

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prayed so far away from her - alone. I started to come to realize that physical presence has such an important part in suffering and in letting go.

God did not spare us from pain. Two years later, as if it were meant to happen every other year, my 36-year-old sister died. God gave me another chance to plead for a life I loved, but I failed again. She left me, my family, and her two little babies then six and eight years old. I was guilty to the third degree.

What is my understanding on suffering? What a question! How could anyone answer it without experiencing it first? How can anyone who has already experienced it answer it without reliving it? Is there really such a thing as understanding suffering? Death does not make sense.

The only one kind of pain that does make sense is birth. There at the shadows of life and death, there where everything is distant and only struggles are left, pain makes sense. It is accompanied by the hope of a new love, a new life. That is the only form of suffering and pain that seems to have a purpose. It is not only a time of physical pain, but a time when life is at its review. Everything from the past and present is at trial in the minutes that might take a life - mine, or his, or both of ours. Still, that makes sense because of hope.

Hope? What hope is left after the ones we love are gone? Many say there is no hope. What do they know? There is no comparable hope to that of the ones who have just lost someone. They believe in miracles like no other person ever before. They hope for the resurrection of the dead and they look for that. They hope for reconciliation with the one that filed for divorce. They hope for recovery. They hope day and night. All of them do. We, my family, we all did. I did.

And when hope fails, new feelings replace it. Yes, feelings that we do not ever admit, even to ourselves, because God might punish us with a loss of another loved one for feeling this way. It takes one loss to change the image of a loving God into a punishing, rebuking unfair power. It takes loss to turn a child of God into the accused offender whose sins and deficiencies are the cause of loss in God's courtroom. False understandings, and yet so real. They go through our minds and we are almost unable to control them. Who is there to blame? We find them!

Going through the loss of a loved one is always, truly a disappointment with God. "Because those who commit their lives to God, no matter what, instinctively expect something in return" (Philip Yancey, *Disappointment with God* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988], 37). I was so self-righteous and convinced that since I lived my life to the best I could meet His standards. I deserved to be heard. Oh, how I searched for meaning, and yet never found it. Even today I do not see reason or meaning in death.

**In Him all things are new - including our understandings and feelings**

Through the grace of God I have come to realize that life was created by God and death was chosen by man. Death is the nature that is in us. It is not a punishment for something I have done or missed doing. When Christians hear such statements concerning "nature," they tend to disregard them as secular thoughts. It all depends on how deeply we read and accept the Word.

When Adam sinned, sin entered the entire human race. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned. ... So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's Wonderful kindness rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 5: 12, 21)

These words tie in with much that has been mentioned in class. "People live more by promises than by explanations" (Douglas Little, class presentation in Biblical Themes in Pastoral Counseling. Oct. 30.1997). The 'whys' can never be answered since there are things that we cannot comprehend, but we have the promise that we shall meet again because of the grace of God. It is this hope that shall never fail us and the only hope that can bring change into our lives.

And even we Christians, although we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, also groan to be released from pain and suffering. We, too, wait anxiously for that day when God will give us our full rights as his children, including the new bodies he has promised. Now that we are saved, we eagerly look forward to this freedom. For if you already have something, you don't need to hope for it. **But if we look forward to something we don't have yet, we must wait patiently and confidently. And the Holy Spirit helps us in our distress. For we don't even know what we should pray for, nor how we should pray. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.** (Rom. 8:23-26)

What comforting words. In times of suffering, people do not know what to feel, what to say, and how to pray. But then, the Holy Spirit will help, and God the Father understands. What a relief it is to know that I can try to pray for relief of pain, for hope and a future perspective. And trying is enough, because I don't need to know everything and I don't have to live up



to expectations of behavior and feelings. God has no expectations at this point. His love understands. His love sends us his Spirit to work within us, to pray for what we are not even aware of. Oh, what a love! What a Gift! Yet we forget this and fight to feel what we supposed to feel and act as we and others think we should act. If we could just learn to relax in his arms, to trust him and let him work within us.

I am at peace now. ... No, it would sound nice, but I am not. I never will be. I let my emotions sleep and rest, but they can be awakened any time when I let that happen. The question, “do we ever fully recover?”, is answered. No, never. Not on this earth. I still find myself at times wanting to write my grandparents a letter. Sometimes I want to send them pictures of our children. Every time something good happens, I want to share it with them. I want to talk to my sister, to whom I came so close a few months before her death. I want to share my thoughts with her. And then I realize they are gone. For how long? Time is not a factor. They left us yesterday and that was *forever ago*.

I didn't before, but now I believe, that they do see us and are with us. Or is it just another false comforter? Even if it is, it does not hurt. It soothes the pain and brings them 10% back. How ridiculous it sounds: 10% back. After the loss of a loved one, everything matters about them. Everything counts. Every detail has a meaning, a memory, and has emotion attached to it. With time, it softens, but never disappears.

As the memories are playing hide-and-seek in my heart, I come to realize the importance of the present. It often takes us by surprise. Death never creeps up on us. It enters with the entire door in its hand. It bursts into life and does not care about the sounds that it makes. So what should we living do about it? Fear? Run? Some do fear throughout life. Some become slaves of fear and run. But Jesus' words shall encourage us, “I am leaving you with a gift - peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give isn't like the peace the world gives. So don't be troubled or afraid” (John 14: 27).

It is the living that we should focus on. It is I and my relationship with the Father that should be my focus. It is my relationship with those who are still here. For “He is the God of the living, not the dead” (Mark 12:27). God, help us not to worship the dead, but to manifest your love in the living! It is them on whom we should focus. It is they who should experience the love that was given to us to give. It is easy to forget about the living, but Jesus' second greatest commandment is valid even in times of suffering “Love your neighbor” (Mark 12:31). It is a commandment that requires moving on.

### **What can I do? The counselor at the residues of death**

So what is there after death? My husband had 38-40 funerals a year

in the church where he was pastoring in Hungary. Some of those were children, some mothers, others elderly. Some suicidal, some accidental. The families came to him, talked or sat quietly. I remember at times they would sit and talk for more than an hour, sometimes close to two hours. What was there then and what is there now to offer?

The world and the church are full of false comfort. They do not know what to say and how to act, or they think that they know it so well that they say everything theological but lose the person who is suffering and ignore the emotions.

I have found with others who often came to me that all they needed was someone to be present with them. They had talked to themselves and to God so much that they needed someone else to listen and to hear. They never asked what I thought. They never asked what I would advise them at this time of their life. They just sat, cried, talked or looked out the window in silence. Those were comforting moments of silence. How wonderful it was to watch as they stood up, wiped their tears away, and said, "thank you". All I needed to do was take time out for them. Listen: that is the first and most important role of a counselor in times of suffering. Empathy is not always verbal. It is ears and eyes that listen and are not afraid to look behind the tears.

One thing that I am very strongly against are the thoughtless words and expressions, the clichés that are like oil on fire. They deepen the wounds. It is hard to experience that even those whom we trust do not understand our agony. As a counselor, I would rather say: "I don't know what to say. I'm sorry" than throw foolish blankets on their pain to cover the emotions with which I cannot deal.

I also see their need for questions. They do like to remember and they need to do so. Often my husband would ask them to talk about the deceased member of their family, and they calmed down and found comfort in memories and in sharing those memories. It was these times of discovery that helped them in their counseling and in the sermon that my husband preached at the funeral. I think it is similar to what I want to do. I will want to explore what the lost person meant to them, and how they remember him. It could provide guidelines for me as the counselor in furthering steps in the counseling process, and could help them to recognize and organize their thoughts and emotions.

The more difficult part of counseling the suffering is that which focuses on the future. People in Hungary do not believe in counseling. They want to deal with their pain on their own. At least that is what they think. However, taking a closer look at them will show their openness and their desperate need for help. They talk at their garden gates, in the market, in the stores and on the streets. They talk to anyone and everyone, as long as it does

not look "official". Many came to me bringing goods from their garden. They said they came to share what God had given them. They seemed ready to leave, but when I offered them a chair and my time, they talked with a speed beyond limits. It is during these times, after the funeral and when the newness of death has passed, when it is not the talk of the village anymore, when they need us most. It is then when they are the loneliest. It is then when they are ready for the future. They want to go on with life, but do not know how. It is good, therefore, to have an understanding of how to advise them. At these times they are thankful to hear someone else say that they are capable of doing things. They take showers that refreshen them in hearing that they have strengths and abilities. They are like little children who eagerly wait for incentives. They want to move on, but need that first push. This cannot be done without knowledge and understanding of the person and his loss. It is then that the time spent in listening and gentle questioning brings its fruit. The information that we are not aware of, and the answers and guidelines that we are not capable of giving, will be supplemented by the Holy Spirit. That is the difference between secular and pastoral counselors. We are strengthened and guided by the greatest Counselor.

These times of comforting, exploring, and searching can develop to the final stage of counseling, which is the belief in the future. That is a long process that takes time and energy. It takes acceptance that things will never be the same, yet still life has a purpose. We are called to help them focus on God and his calling for them. As they draw closer to God, they will experience the peace that only he can give and does give. They will then be able to move from the dead to the living and live for God and those who are left here.

I recall a young woman who lost her father. For two years she struggled and struggled, and felt like she would never recover. When she finally met Christ as the Love, the Comforter, the Redeemer, she slowly came to realize that she was called to live for action. She became one of the most supportive members in our church in children's ministries, and is still the one who holds the young mothers' group together. There was no magic ointment involved in her recovery. It was simply and yet most complexly the experience of the closeness of God and the hearing of his call that have changed her life. The absence of her father is still there. The pain still awakens at times. But she got up and is no longer crawling at the feet of death.

As I think through this, I remember one of Jesus' healings: Bartimeus came to Jesus, although many tried to stop him. He was blind and wanted to see. Those who suffer want to see. They come to us, because they sense Jesus.



“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked.

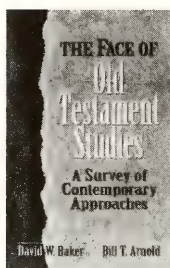
“Teacher,” the blind man said, “I want to see!”

And Jesus said to him, “Go your way. Your faith has healed you.” And instantly the blind man could see! Then he followed Jesus down the road. Mark 10:51-52

This is my desire as a counselor to those who are suffering, to bring them to Jesus so they might see. See the future as a way through the times of pain. See a road that they may step on to follow Jesus, to move on, to act, and to live.

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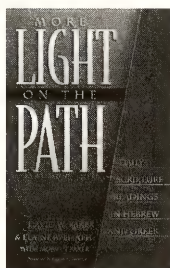
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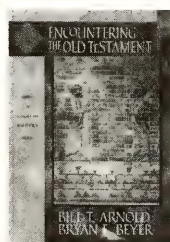
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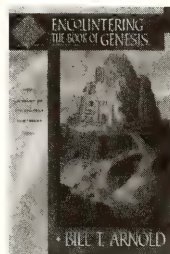
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## **Gifts in the Context of Love: Reflections on 1 Corinthians 13**

By Russell Morton\*

### **Introduction**

In 1 Cor 12-14 Paul proposes several solutions to divisions within the Corinthian church caused by strife over spiritual gifts. One is through the metaphor of the "body of Christ," which was intended to alleviate two opposite, but related errors. On the one hand, individuals lacking the more dramatic gifts were denigrating their own contribution to the Christian community. Likewise, those possessing more dramatic and showy gifts held those lacking these manifestations in some contempt.<sup>1</sup> In short, we see a situation characterized by stratification. To alleviate this problem,<sup>2</sup> to put the role of gifts into perspective, Paul proposes his most profound answer to Corinthian factionalism by inserting 1 Cor. 13, the "love chapter"<sup>3</sup> into his argument. This is one of the most cherished portions of the entire NT, and for good reason. Yet, however valuable it is simply to read over the text, to meditate upon it, and to memorize it, one should also take time to analyze its contents and begin to plumb the depths of Paul's thought.

### **Linguistic Excursus on the Three Common Greek Words for Love**

Often individuals expounding this text to discuss the differences between the three most common Greek nouns used for love, *φίλος* (*philos*), *ερώς* (*eros*) and *ἀγάπη* (*agape*). *ερώς* (*eros*), we are told, is passionate love. *φίλος* (*philos*), on the other hand, is brotherly love or affection. *ἀγάπη* (*agape*), or disinterested, unconditional love, however, is what we are to strive for. This analysis is convenient, and as it regards *hñūr*, is even, to a great extent, correct<sup>4</sup>. The problem comes in the discussion of *φίλος* (*philos*) and *ἀγάπη* (*agape*). Here, the comparison breaks down, for the differences between the two words are neither as significant, nor as profound, as is often asserted. The word *φίλος* (*philos*), for example, had traditionally represented the most significant form of love in classical Greek. Also, in the NT, the Gospel of John often employs *φίλος* (*philos*) and *ἀγάπη* (*agape*) synonymously.<sup>5</sup> The verbal form *φιλέω* (*phileo*), however, became commonly associated with the act of a kiss by the first century,<sup>6</sup> and, thus, became a somewhat problematic as a term for love.

*ἀγάπη* (*agape*), on the other hand, was the word most commonly used in the LXX to translate the various Hebrew terms for love.<sup>7</sup>

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Thus, in the Greek OT, ἀγάπη (agape) has a range of meaning which is just as vague as our word "love" in English. It has both secular and religious meanings. In the secular realm, it can mean the love parents have for children, and is, thus, a natural term to refer to God's special love for Israel.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, it can also be used for erotic love, as it is in the case of 2 Sam 13:1-22, the story of Amnon's attack on Tamar.

Yet, the word also has a religious connotation, where God is moved by love for the people with whom he has established his covenant. Abraham, for example, is one who is "beloved" of God, with whom the covenant is established. Furthermore, in the commandment of Lev 19:18, 34, the people of Israel are instructed to love their neighbors as a sign of their covenant with God. The concept of one's love for God, nevertheless, undoubtedly reaches its epitomal expression in Jer. 31:31, where readers are promised a new heart and a new covenant, where one will respond to God not in fear, but pure love.<sup>9</sup>

The point of this excursus is to show that words do not have intrinsic meaning, but derive significance from their context.<sup>10</sup> In Paul, ἀγάπη (agape) means unconditional love which God shows to his people, because the Apostle, versed in the language and imagery of the Greek OT, uses it that way. Just as God has acted in the past, through love to select the people of Israel, so now God has acted in Jesus Christ, and through the sending of the Holy Spirit to create a new people, the church. It is created as a result of God's act of unconditional love, and, as a result, our response to God should be one of love and thanksgiving. God's work of love is, furthermore, eschatological, the one thing that exceeds hope and faith (1 Cor 13:13; cf. 1 Thess 1:3; 5:8; Col 1:4-5). It is what motivates God and God's people, and what leads to the culmination of God's purposes on earth.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps nowhere is this conviction better summarized than in 1 Cor. 13. It is here, rather than in dubious word studies that we find the true definition of Christian love.

### **1 Corinthians 13 in the Context of Chapters 12-14**

It is not fortuitous that Paul places his argument here.<sup>12</sup> Although it is something of a digression, "as with all such 'digressions,' it is fully relevant to the context, and without it the succeeding argument would lose much of its force."<sup>13</sup> It is through his discussion of love that the Apostle is able to redirect the Corinthian Christians' concern with gifts and manifestations and to place it "within a broader ethical context."<sup>14</sup>

Paul employs some of the language of 12:8-9 in his enumeration of gifts and virtues, which, without love, are at best incomplete, and at worse profitless. In 13:1, 8, he mentions tongues, which was listed in 12:8, and in 14:1-25 appear to be a cause of great disorder in the church. In 13:2, 8, Paul

alludes to prophecies, which, again are mentioned in 12:8, and are considered the superior gift in 14:1-5, 24-25. In 13:2 Paul also makes reference to miracle working faith, which is referred to as a spiritual gift in 12:9.<sup>15</sup> In short, 1 Cor 13 is the pivotal point of Paul's argument, to show that overt manifestations of spirituality, as one finds in the gifts, must be subordinated to the good of the community. The argument that begins with the metaphor of the "Body of Christ" is now confirmed when Paul decides to show or indicate the "more excellent" or "higher" way (1 Cor. 12:31).

### **Analysis**

Most commentators are agreed that 1 Cor. 13 falls into three basic divisions:<sup>16</sup> (1) 13:1-3; (2) 13:4-7; and (3) 13:8-13. These sections will be discussed under the following heads: (1) 13:1-3, The necessity of love; (2) 13:4-7, The characteristics of love; and (3) 13:8-13, The eternal endurance of love.

#### **1. 13:1-3. The Necessity of Love**

Paul introduces his discussion of love by connecting it with his previous discussion of the nature of spiritual gifts. In 12:31b, he says that he will show, or point out, to his readers, the "more excellent way." Having just reminded the Corinthians that they are all the body of Christ, and members individually (12:27),<sup>17</sup> the Apostle proceeds to give a short list of gifts in descending order of importance, first apostles, second prophets, etc., in 12:28. In 12:29-30, the readers are reminded that no gift characterizes every member of the church. Nevertheless, the Corinthians are exhorted to "be zealous for the greater gifts" (12:31). Paul, then, shifts his discussion, by pointing to the "more excellent way."

The concept of a "way" is not unique to Paul. In Acts, Christianity itself is referred to as, "The Way" (see Acts 22:4; 24:14, 22). Furthermore, the introductory section of the *Didache* (Did 1-6) is known as the "Two ways," where the way of life is contrasted with the way of death. In the context of 1 Cor 12-14, however, Paul is not simply describing a way leading to one of the gifts, "but one that leads beyond them, nor is it a way that leads to love, but love *is* the way, at the same time also the goal of ... 'pursuing' and striving."<sup>18</sup> Indeed, the spiritual gifts only have value as they are exercised in the context of love.<sup>19</sup>

In 13:1, Paul begins a series of "if ... then" clauses, where some of the spiritual manifestation listed in 12:8-10 are shown to be meaningless in the absence of love. First, he refers to the gift the Corinthians seem to hold in highest esteem, tongues. "If I speak in the tongues of humans and angels, but I have not love, I have become an echoing brass and a clashing cymbal." The

language is harsh, but even harsher than we may at first realize. To be regarded as a mere noisemaker is bad enough. A clashing cymbal, however, is the kind of sound which was, in the first century, often affiliated with ecstatic cults.<sup>20</sup> Thus, Paul asserts that even though one practices ecstatic speech and praises God in the language of angels, if this action is not accompanied by divine love, Christians are like their neighbors who clang cymbals and gongs in order to attract the attention of their deaf and mute idols. Thus, spiritual gifts, even the most dramatic, cannot be an end in and of themselves, but must be accompanied by love. Here is where the Corinthians have gone tragically wrong. They have placed supreme value on "experience" over the Christian ethic, the love of God, demonstrated in his gift of Christ to us.

In addition to tongues, Paul also cites two other gifts, which were of great importance to the Corinthian congregation, prophecy and knowledge. Paul himself values prophecy, and holds it up as the most significant of the gifts (see 14:1, 3-5, 13-25). Yet, if it is unaccompanied by love, Paul states, "I am nothing." The same can be said about knowledge. The Corinthians themselves seem to have placed special value on "knowledge" (see 1 Cor 8:1-3). In ch. 8, the issue is whether or not idols have any reality. If they do not, some Corinthians argued, then eating idol meat is irrelevant, since the idol is nothing. Here, the emphasis seems to be on proper understanding of the eschatological situation of the church,<sup>21</sup> so as to understand spiritual mysteries, especially in the form of special revelations (see 14:6). In both cases, however, knowledge must take a back seat to love. In 8:1-3, the knowledge of some leads to defiling the conscience of the spiritually weak (8:7), leading to their spiritual destruction over food (8:8-10). Indeed, later on Paul equates the actions of eating meat dedicated to idols as participating in the demonic (10:14-22). Thus, "knowledge," when divorced from love, leads to spiritual ruin.

Likewise, to know all mysteries, if not combined with love, profits the Christian nothing. One can have spiritual insights, one can be bestowed with great discernment, but, if it is divorced from love, it is of no use to that person in the final judgment. It would be truly ironic for one to have such a spiritual gift, yet be ignorant of one's own condition before God. Yet, such blindness is possible, and Paul warns about it most emphatically.

Furthermore, one may have great miracle working faith, the kind of faith described in 12:9.<sup>22</sup> Paul seems to allude here, however, to the Jesus tradition recorded in Mk 11:23 and Mt 17:20, and describes such faith as able "to move mountains."<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, the most powerful faith is vain if it is not accompanied by love. Finally, in 13:3, we find two more aspects which demonstrate the need for Christian love. On the one hand, Paul points to philanthropy. While not denying that we should care for the poor, or that such concern may have social merit,<sup>24</sup> Paul leaves open the possibility that it can be



motivated by a loveless spirit. Thus, if one divides up one's property and doles it out<sup>25</sup> bit by bit, if the individual lacks love, the action is worthless.

The next phrase is somewhat obscure. The textual evidence is divided. It is usually translated "if I give up my body to be burned." Yet, if only one Greek letter is changed, we read, "If I give my body up so that I may boast."<sup>26</sup> While a number of scholars support the reading of "to be burned,"<sup>27</sup> there is also very strong ms. support for, "that I may boast." If the former reading is correct, Paul may have in mind the image of the seven brothers, who in 2 Macc 7, allowed themselves to suffer martyrdom, even at the cost of being burned alive, rather than renounce the Jewish law. This imagery continued to be popular in Judaism, and was developed in gruesome detail in 4 Macc. Another possibility is that Paul may be speaking of self-immolation, as in the case of an Indian mystic who burned himself alive in Athens.<sup>28</sup>

On the other hand, if the latter reading is original, what we may have is a parallel to the idea of dividing up all one's possessions. Here is an individual who is willing so far as to be sold into slavery to give to the poor. But the motive is not love, but that "I may boast." It may be, somewhat fortuitous that the text is obscure here, with either image providing a warning to readers. While not many of us personally may be threatened with martyrdom, the temptation always exists to boast in our spiritual accomplishments. Especially in this "politically correct" age, it is possible someone would sell all he or she had, and take a much lower paying position, in order to prove spirituality. Another possibility, at least in Roman Catholic and some Anglican circles, would be to join a religious order, to totally "sell oneself" to God, to relinquish all possessions. But if this is done without love, what does it profit? At least for that individual, it "profits nothing."

Thus, we see why love is necessary. Neither the demonstration of outstanding spiritual gifts, nor the performance of heroic religious tasks, are efficacious without it. It is not merely the foundation for spiritual life, but is, rather, the essence of spiritual life. No outward performances alone can substitute for it. We also are warned not to become too proud of our religious accomplishments, for it is apparently possible to be given great spiritual gifts, or achieve great things, even while lacking love. But, to know whether or not we measure up, we have to know what love is.

## **2. 13:4-7. The Characteristics of Love**

Paul begins by describing what love in positive terms, of being patient and kind. The word patient is sometimes translated "longsuffering" in the AV, which is a literal rendering of μακροθυμεῖ, which literally means "suffer long," and is used in the LXX as a description of the character of God.<sup>29</sup> In this context, it refers both to God's kindness, and his wrath. The former is

bestowed on Israel and is a manifestation of divine love. The latter is a characteristic of God's justice, and while on the one hand God is longsuffering, allowing people to repent, at the same time the God of Israel would not be God without exercising divine judgment against sin. "What it does mean is that alongside wrath there is a divine restraint which postpones its operation until something takes place ... which justifies the postponement."<sup>30</sup> Thus, it is a demonstration of the character of God, as evidenced in divine goodness toward righteousness, and divine restraint against sin.

The word carries much the same meaning in Paul. In Rom 9:22, we see the two words, patience and kindness, in close association with each other, along with the word for forbearance, as descriptions of the character of God, which are intended to lead one to repentance.<sup>31</sup> Thus, the kind of love of which Paul speaks reflects the character of God. In this case, it represents the passive side of God's character, in that it is manifested in the holding back of divine wrath.<sup>32</sup>

Along with patience, one finds that love is also described as "kind." In the LXX, it is a term mostly used with persons, and has the connotation of "benevolence."<sup>33</sup> In the NT, the term is applied to God, who is called "mild," "kind," or "helpful" in dealing with humanity,<sup>34</sup> and, thus, "has a special reference, then, to God's act of grace effected in and through Christ."<sup>35</sup> Thus, just as "patience" describes a divine attribute bestowed upon the Christian, so "kindness" denotes how the believer shares God's character. In contrast with the passive connotation of "patience," however, "kindness" is God's active trait, and "is found in the thousandfold expressions of his mercy."<sup>36</sup>

While the first two verbs describe the positive attributes of love, the next seven in 13:4-7 describe what love is not, and implicitly contrast the way of love with some of the conduct of the Corinthian church. First, love is not jealous. Neither is it "boastful." *περπερεύεται* (*perpereuetai*)<sup>37</sup> means not only "boastful," but also "to act like a braggart," or "to be a windbag," and occurs in the NT only here.<sup>38</sup> In the context of 1 Cor, one is reminded of the Corinthian Christians' behavior described in 1:10-17 and 3:1-3, where the various factions boast, or brag about their various teachers. Furthermore, in 1 Cor 4:8-13, we see the members of the Corinthian church boasting in their spiritual riches, which Paul contrasts with the apostolic service and poverty.

At the same time, love is not "puffed up," or proud and arrogant against another person.<sup>39</sup> This attitude is precisely the opposite of what Paul warns the Corinthians about in 8:1, where "knowledge puffs up, but love edifies." As we saw in our discussion of 13:2, the Corinthians prided themselves in their spiritual knowledge. Yet, Paul warns them that it is only partial. Indeed, if it leads to pride, it can become dreadfully deceptive, for we can find ourselves extolling and being very proud of what is, in fact, something

which is partial and temporal, rather than pursue divine love, which is eternal. While we pursue what may be good we may deny ourselves of what is, in fact, God's best for us by seeking knowledge at the price of love. In such cases, we, like the Corinthians, can become extremely proud.

Love also does not behave disrespectfully or dishonorably, does not seek things of itself, does not become irritated, does not consider wrong, does not rejoice in wrong, but rejoices in truth. Love conducts itself in precisely the manner opposite to that which characterizes much of the Corinthian congregation. The confusion over the role of gifts, for example, undoubtedly derives from the same type of attitude as the factionalism described in 1:10-17, the desire to elevate oneself or one's group at the expense of others. At the same time, these characteristics are also precisely the opposite of the divine patience and kindness which God has shown to the Corinthians, "and the summons is implicit: act as God does."<sup>40</sup>

In contrast to the attitude of party spirit, in vs. 7 we see that, love, "always endures, always believes, always hopes, always remains."<sup>41</sup> Implicit here is Paul's understanding of the person and work of Christ.<sup>42</sup> Yet, it is an understanding which also has immensely practical results. "The life that is so touched by the never-ceasing love of God in Christ (cf. Rom. 8:39) is in turn enabled by the Spirit to love others in the same way. It trusts God in behalf of the one loved, hopes to the end that God will show mercy in that person's behalf."<sup>43</sup> Since love always endures, believes, hopes and remains, there is no room for bragging, being puffed up in pride, or seeking self advancement at the price of the ruin of others. Such a love is not the product of human striving or affection. It is only possible as God's gift through the Holy Spirit. For that reason, it is only when spiritual gifts are empowered by divine love that they are effective, for love has an eschatological dimension not found in any other spiritual gift or attribute, as Paul demonstrates in 13:8-13.

### **3. 13:8-13. The Eternal Endurance of Love**

In verses 8-12, we find that love has an enduring quality, which exceeds every spiritual gift. In addition, in 13:13, we find that love is the greatest of the three enduring qualities, which are among those items referred to as the "fruits of the spirit" in Gal 5:22-23. How does love excel over the other two? .

The paragraph begins with the famous phrase, "love never fails," that is, it never ceases, or comes to an end.<sup>44</sup> In contrast, the three gifts mentioned will cease. The NRSV translates Paul's description of the temporal nature of the gifts as: "But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end." While not as lyrical as that of the AV, it is an accurate reflection of the original. In staccato like



sequence, the contrast with love is demonstrated. The same verbis used to say that both knowledge and prophesying "will come to an end".<sup>45</sup> Tongues will cease. Here the gift of prophecy, for which Paul expresses a preference in 1 Cor 14, as well as tongues and knowledge, the two favorites of the Corinthians themselves,<sup>46</sup> are set in contrast to the eternal nature of love.

The reason for the contrast is found in 13:9-10. We know in part, and we prophecy only in part. Here, Paul's language is employed "to denote the situation of Christians in this age. There is now no perfect knowledge, no full exercise of the prophetic gift. Though controlled by the spirit, the earthly existence of the Christian stands under the sign of the partial."<sup>47</sup> The three gifts, although they are important, although they are manifestations of the Spirit of God, are only God's manifestation for the building of the community in this age which is "between times,"<sup>48</sup> of Christ's first and second advents. They are temporal, while love bears the character of God, and will characterize the Christian now and in eternity.

This temporal character is especially emphasized in vs. 10. We now know in part, and we prophesy in part. Yet, at the final consummation, when the complete, or, that to which a goal or end is directed, the final outcome,<sup>49</sup> has arrived, the partial is abolished. Gifts, therefore, by their very nature, are not goals in and of themselves. For, "the 'gifts,' provided they are controlled by love, belong to the present age ... only love can be called the 'bond of perfection' (Col. 3:14), and it will never disappear."<sup>50</sup>

To emphasize his point, Paul, in 13:11-12, employs two metaphors: contrast between the thinking and reasoning of a child with that of an adult in vs. 11, and the difference between seeing a reflection in a mirror and seeing someone face to face in vs. 12. The comparison with a "child" in vs. 11 is reminiscent of 3:1, where the Apostle chides the Corinthians for being "children in Christ" on account of their factionalism. The meaning of the word in 3:1 connotes, "immature," or "foolish."<sup>51</sup> By implication, Paul is contrasting the attitude of the Corinthians, with their excessive emphasis on outward manifestations and gifts rather than on character and unity<sup>52</sup> with the attitude of the mature Christian, in whose life the Holy Spirit operates, bestowing divine compassion. It is not the showy, not the dramatic, which demonstrates God's power and presence in an individual. Rather, one's spirituality is manifested in the routine actions and attitudes which may be hidden and intangible.

In 13:11b, Paul further contrasts the attitude of the mature with the spiritually immature preoccupation with the dramatic. In the phrase, "when I became a man, I put end to childish things," he uses the same word employed in vss. 8 and 10 for the temporal nature of tongues and prophecies. While the gifts should not be considered merely "childish," for they are manifestations of God's presence, the Corinthians' attitude toward them is. It is a case of

worshiping the creation instead of the Creator (see Rom 1:25), of a situation when seeing as through a reflection in a mirror, is confused with seeing face to face.

This fact is confirmed in 13:12, when Paul contrasts our current situation to that which occurs at the consummation of the age. The idea is that is that present perception is indirect, and, therefore, imperfect.<sup>53</sup> Thus, in 13:12b is the contrast between now, when we know in part, and the time of the end, when we will know as we are known, i.e. attain to complete knowledge at the time of Christ's return. The contrast between the provisional nature of our current circumstances with that which will be made plain in the end is emphasized by the phrase, "in part," which utilizes the same words as found in 13:9, where we know and prophesy "in part." Thus, as the gifts need love to be properly exercised, it follows that love is greater.

It may be said that for Paul the "fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22,23) are in a class greater than "gifts of the Spirit"; and so the Corinthians need to cultivate such fellowship inspired by the spirit that the "gifts" on which they had set their hearts are not allowed to take to prominent a place or be valued for their own sake.<sup>54</sup>

Paul concludes with verse 13, "But now abide faith, hope, love, these three things; but the greatest of these is love." Faith hope and love are the great Christian virtues,<sup>55</sup> which operate in place of the four great Stoic virtues of goodness, justice, prudence and courage. The Christian triad is found elsewhere in Paul and the NT (see 1 Thess 1:3; 5:8; Col 1:4-5; Rom 5:3-5 [with "perseverance" instead of faith]; Heb 6:10-12; 10:22-24; 1 Pet 1:3-8), but what is original is that here we read not that these are the Christian virtues, but that "the greatest of these" is love. Why is would Paul make this comparison? All three of these virtues are enduring. Each carries implications for the quality of Christian life as expectation of God's final victory.<sup>56</sup> Why is love the greatest?

The answer may be that in love we see the Christian sharing in something which is unique to the character of God himself. Because of what it means to be God, God does not exercise faith, for how can he believe in something greater? Nor does God hope, but, is, rather, the object of our hope. What God does do is love, and, and, indeed, would not be God without it. To the extent that we love, God's own character is expressed in and through us.<sup>57</sup> For this reason, love is the greatest of the three "virtues."

### Conclusion

In the midst of Paul's discussion of the spiritual gifts, he inserts this *encomium*, or high praise, to love, which is nothing less than God's gift, as demonstrated in Christ. It puts the gifts in their perspective, for they have their validity only to the extent that they lead Christians to "pursue love" (1 Cor 14:1)<sup>58</sup> In these three paragraphs we see the unique Christian understanding of love. When reading them, we should be humbled. How can our love ever measure up to the description of 1 Cor 13:4-7? And how can we say that our love never fails? The point, of course, is that our love can never measure up to Paul's expectations, for he is describing something far beyond the capacity of mere mortals. He is summarizing the character of God, which is bestowed as a gift to Christians. Thus, only as we surrender ourselves to God, and allow the Holy Spirit to operate in us, can we ever hope to begin to demonstrate this kind of love. It is not an achievement, it is a gift. Yet, a gift we must claim, as we abandon our own arrogance and prerogatives, and embark upon, "the more excellent way."

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> E. Best, *One Body in Christ: A Study in the Relationship of the Church to Christ in the Epistles of the Apostle Paul* (London: S.P.C.K., 1955), 102.

<sup>2</sup> See W. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians* (New Haven: Yale, 1983), 90.

<sup>3</sup> The following discussion presupposes the unity of 1 Cor. 12-14, either as Paul's own composition, or as the Apostle himself inserting a pre-Pauline tradition found in 1 Cor. 13 to bolster his argument. For a differing point of view, see, W.O. Walker, "Is First Corinthians 13 a Non-Pauline Interpolation?" *CBQ* 60 (1998), 484-499.

<sup>4</sup> See LSJ9, 695. ἔρως, however, also has broader meaning in patristic Greek, including God's love for human beings, or humans love for God. It can also be used as a synonym for ἀγάπη. See PGL, 550.

<sup>5</sup> G. Stählin, "φιλέω, κτλ," TDNT, 9:116, 129-136; BAGD, 859.

<sup>6</sup> Stählin, "φιλέω, κτλ.," 118-123. For kiss in the N.T., see *ibid.*, 138-145.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 124; G. Quell and E. Stauffer, "ἀγαπάω, κτλ.," TDNT 1:22

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 27-29.

<sup>10</sup> This point was made most persuasively by J. Barr in *Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961; reprint, Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1991).

<sup>11</sup> Quell and Stauffer, "ἀγαπάω, κτλ.," 49-52

<sup>12</sup> Contra H. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 217, where he states: "This chapter is a self-contained unity. The links with what goes before (13:31) and after (14:1) are ragged."



<sup>13</sup> G. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 626.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 627. Emphasis original.

<sup>15</sup> C.K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (HNTC; New York: Harper & Row, 1968, 301.

<sup>16</sup> Fee, 627-628; Barrett, 299; R. Martin, *The Spirit and the Congregation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 41-2; G. Johnston, "Love in the NT," *IDB*, 3:174. Conzelmann, 218. Conzelmann's analysis varies slightly from Fee and Barrett in that he assigns vs. 13 to its own, independent, section. Martin describes vs. 13 as, "a statement of the hymn's thesis with a concluding coda." Likewise, W. Klassen, "Love (NT and Early Jewish)" *ABD* 4:393, divides 1 Cor. 13 thus: 13:1-3, 4-7, 8-12, where 13:13 "points to the eschatological dimension of Paul's view of love."

<sup>17</sup> ἐκ μέρους (*ek merous*), meaning individually, see BAGD 506.

<sup>18</sup> Conzelmann, 216.

<sup>19</sup> Martin, 43.

<sup>20</sup> Conzelmann, 221; Fee, 633. Klassen, "Love," 393 states that the clashing cymbal or noisy brass is "perhaps reminiscent of the clashing cymbals of Cybele's procession conducted by priests, who were, along with poets dubbed 'drums and cymbals of self-advertisement.'"

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 632-3; Barrett, 301.

<sup>22</sup> Barrett, 301; see Martin, 44.

<sup>23</sup> Fee, 632, n. 32

<sup>24</sup> See Martin, 45.

<sup>25</sup> The likely meaning of ψωμι ζω, see BAGD 894.

<sup>26</sup> κανχήσομαι (*kauchesomai*), supported by P<sup>46</sup>, <sup>1</sup>, A, B, D, F, G, 048 and several miniscules; or κανθήσομαι (*kauthesomai*), supported by C, D, F, G, L and several miniscules.

<sup>27</sup> Barrett, 301, Fee, 634, Conzelmann, 222, Martin, 45, Klassen, "Love," 393

<sup>28</sup> Martin, 45; Klassen, "Love," "The case of self-immolation had numerous antecedents and was a standard illustration of the time.

<sup>29</sup> J. Horst, "μακροθυμία, κτλ." *TDNT* 4:376-9.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 377.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 382.

<sup>32</sup> Fee, 636.

<sup>33</sup> K. Weiss, "χρηστός, κτλ.," *TDNT*, 9:485.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 487.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 488.

<sup>36</sup> Fee, 636-7.

<sup>37</sup> περερεύεται (*perereuetai*), often translated, "boastful."

<sup>38</sup> BAGD, 653.

<sup>39</sup> φυσιοῦται (*physioutai*), see BAGD, 869.

<sup>40</sup> Martin, 50.

<sup>41</sup> πάντα (*panta*), in an adverbial sense, meaning "always," see Martin, 51.

<sup>42</sup> Klassen, "Love," 393.

<sup>43</sup> Fee, 640.

- <sup>44</sup> W. Michaelis, "πίπτω, κτλ., " TDNT, 6:165.  
<sup>45</sup> καταργέω (*katargeo*), in the aorist passive future.  
<sup>46</sup> Fee, 643.  
<sup>47</sup> J. Schneider, "μέρος," TDNT, 4:596.  
<sup>48</sup> Fee, 643.  
<sup>49</sup> BAGD, 811.  
<sup>50</sup> Martin, 54.  
<sup>51</sup> G. Bertram, "νήπιος, " TDNT, 4:912; cf. BAGD 537. J. C. Hurd, *The Origin of 1 Corinthians* (2nd ed. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983), 108-113, although, he is too restrictive in saying that Paul is specifically comparing the Corinthians' concern with glossolalia to "babbling babies" (112-113, 189). Rather, their whole behavior, including their factionalism, would show them to be speaking as "children."  
<sup>52</sup> Bertram, 917; Martin, 54.  
<sup>53</sup> Fee, 648; Conzelmann, 228; Barrett, 309.  
<sup>54</sup> Martin, 54.  
<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 55.  
<sup>56</sup> Klassen, "Love (NT and Early Jewish)," 393.  
<sup>57</sup> Barrett, 311  
<sup>58</sup> Hurd, 189-190.

#### Abbreviations

ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
AV	Authorized (i.e. King James) Version
BAGD	Bauer, Walter, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> , 2nd ed. Translated by William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
HNTC	Harpers New Testament Commentaries
IDB	<i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
LSJ9	Liddell, Henry George and Robert Scott, <i>A Greek English Lexicon</i> . Rev. by Henry Stuart Jones. 9th ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
Ms	Manuscript
NT	New Testament
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
OT	Old Testament
PGL	Lampe, G.W.H. <i>A Patristic Greek Lexicon</i> . Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961.
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament

#### Abbreviations of Biblical and Extra Biblical References Old Testament

Lev            Leviticus

#### New Testament

Col            Colossians

1 Cor	1 Corinthians
Gal	Galatians
Mk	Mark
Mt	Matthew
Rom	Romans
1 Thess	1 Thessalonians

#### Apocrypha

2 Macc	2 Maccabees
4 Macc	4 Maccabees

#### Church Fathers

Did	Didache
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## **A PLEA FOR HOLY FELLOWSHIP**

### **2 CORINTHIANS 6:14-7:1**

by Victoria A. Wheeler\*

Corinth, in Paul's day, was the heart of Greece, surpassing Athens both as the economic center of trade and as the political capital. Situated on a narrow isthmus between two major trade harbors, one leading west to Italy and the other south east to Asia, this Greco-Roman city became a wealthy hub in the merchandise trade along the northern Mediterranean. The Isthmian Games also drew in considerable revenue, as did the prostitution cult surrounding the Temple of Aphrodite, which at one time included a thousand male and female temple slaves.<sup>1</sup>

Paul arrived in Corinth during his second missionary journey (c. AD 50-51). His itinerary took him first to the local synagogue, which in Corinth was located along the Lechaion Road, below the Acrocorinth. He met up with two Jewish converts to Christianity from Rome, Aquila and Priscilla, with whom he lived and worked as a tent maker during his extended eighteen month stint there. Beginning with Jews, and then turning to Gentiles, Paul saw several prominent people come to Christ: Crispus, the synagogue leader; Gaius, host to the Corinthian house church and to Paul on his second visit there; and Erastus, the city treasurer, who later accompanied Timothy to Ephesus.

While living with the people in Corinth, Paul established roots which grew into a deep concern for their steadfastness in the Lord. This regard prompted his letters to them which he wrote during his third missionary journey, the first written probably in Ephesus (c. AD 54-55), and the second from Macedonia (c. AD 55-56), just weeks before his second visit there. The Corinthian correspondence portrays both a cosmopolitan, urban church caught in the tension between holy living in a world of immorality and political and economic snares, and also Paul, who opens himself up to expose the nature of a true apostle (i.e. father, teacher, model), establishing his right to be involved in, and offer practical and theological guidance to, this community of believers.

Just how many letters are encompassed within this literary corpus to the church at Corinth is debatable. 1 Cor 5:9 suggests a previous letter was written, which now is lost. 2 Cor 2:4 speaks of a letter written with "many tears," the existence of which cannot be determined. The uneven nature of 2 Corinthians might intimate that it is actually a compilation of several letters, perhaps made up of a) 6:14-7:1, now only a fragment; b) chapters 1-9, excluding the previous verses; and c) chapters 10-13.<sup>2</sup> Regardless of their quantity, the quality of the letters speaks to a deeply personal and lively

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association between the community and Paul, who, even in his absence, remained connected to those whom he considered his spiritual children.

That 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 could be an extant fragment of another letter cannot be proved. Yet some scholars believe it can stand alone, either as a rhetorical digression or as an independent text (either from Paul or another source), imported into the epistle (perhaps by the author or a later redactor).

Fitzmyer makes an interesting argument for the passage originating with the Qumran Essene sect.<sup>3</sup> He claims the unit, containing considerable *hapax legomena* vocabulary, does not fit in the context of Paul's plea for reconciliation, and is devoid of any clues that it relates to any problem within the Corinthian church, specifically. Most importantly, Fitzmyer claims several features of the passage have a significant Qumran background, and he believes it to be a Christian reworking of Essene expressions.

Witherington, citing Quintillian, convincingly argues the passage is a digression (*egressio*), a common rhetorical device.<sup>4</sup> Marked by an increased zeal, a digression functions within the context of a personal defense against opponents, and appeals to religion, duty, or historical events to admonish the audience's future behavior. Witherington goes on to point out that the syntax of the immediate context would be somewhat redundant without the digression. He claims the style is Pauline, and the material can be sufficiently traced to parallel passages in the first six chapters of the letter. In addition, the allusion in 6:11 and 14ff to Deut 11:16 makes a clear connection between the passage and its context, by linking "open hearts" and "idols."

Whether Paul was inspired from Essene concepts is not the focus here. Rather, considering the passage to be original to him, the discussion now will look at the structure. Following Witherington's argument, the immediate context of the passage (i.e. 6:11-13 and 7:2-4) would appear to form a chiasm, creating a singular setting for the passage.

6:11a "Our mouth has spoken freely to you"

6:11b "Our heart is open wide"

6:12 Paul has not restrained the Corinthians

6:13 "Open wide to us also"

7:2a "Make room for us"

7:2b-3a Paul has not wronged, nor condemned them

7:3b "You are in our hearts"

7:4 "Great is my boasting on your behalf"

The tight structure and use of rhetorical coupling and parallelism makes this passage, at the heart of Paul's second letter to the Corinthian church, a strong plea to holy fellowship. True reconciliation with each other, the main theme of Paul's letter, is only possible if the parties involved are brought together into right relationship with Christ. For Christians, that means



exposing and putting off every form of partnering that threatens the covenant community with a holy God, and is discordant with a life wholly consecrated to Him.

**6:14-16a** The passage opens with a present imperative verb (*mēginesthe*), which may imply the Corinthians are already working together in some manner with unbelievers. The verb root is similar to that used in Phil 2:25 and 4:3 to describe Paul's fellow workers of the Gospel. The unbelievers, or unfaithful, are those who have been blinded by the god of this world, leaving them in darkness, and unable to see the light of the Gospel (2 Cor 4:4).

A series of rhetorical questions underscore the separation and thus the inherent impossibility of any form of mutuality between the believer (in Christ) and the unbeliever. Each coupling expresses concepts in opposition to each other: righteousness and lawlessness (also Rom 6:19), light and darkness, Christ and Beliar (Satan), believers and unbelievers, the temple of God and idols (false gods). The questions are structurally unified by the alliteration of the *tis* - *ē tis* combination, and culminate in the aurally similar, yet distinct, *hēmeis*, (further emphasized by the postpositive), which sets off the phrase, "but **we** are the living temple of God."

Righteousness and the Law are related in regard to sin. Sin is what separates and makes fellowship impossible, The Law makes one aware of sin, but does not render sin powerless. For Paul, the only way for partnering within right relationships was a righteousness beyond the Law, found solely through faith in Christ. Certainly then, those who are lawless do not even have the benefit of the knowledge of sin which would come with the Law. Thus, the righteous and the lawless stand separated by the unbridgeable chasm of the ignorance of sin.

The relation of light to darkness could be associated with creation.<sup>5</sup> But, since both are created and declared good, this could lead to confusion here. Paul speaks metaphorically when he relates light and darkness with the glory of God and knowledge versus paganism (2 Cor 4:4-6), guidance for the blind, the strength of armor against the sinful deeds of weak flesh (Rom 2:19f; 13:12), and the disclosure of things hidden (1 Cor 4:5).

One of the numerous *hapax legomena* of this passage is *Beliar*, an OT word meaning death, or worthlessness (Ps 18:4). The MT vowel pointing renders a word meaning "without" (*b'li*) "profit" (*ya'al*). The Hebrew root *bala* means "swallow up" or "engulf," and would then produce the name *Sheol*, or Engulfed. The word became the personification of such (i.e. Satan, the devil) in the writings of the intertestamental period and the NT.<sup>6</sup> Here, the one who devours is juxtaposed with the One who is life, Christ. Paul then contrasts the one who believes in Christ with the unbeliever.

The final comparison is between the temple of God and idols. God's dwelling place within the temple in Jerusalem was the Holy of Holies, the innermost part of the temple which contained no statue or replica of God. The presence of the Creator God is dynamic, rather than static; unlike the false gods, whose resemblance could be portrayed by something created, set in a shrine. For Paul, the body of believers, corporately as well as individually, comprised the dwelling place of God (1 Cor 3:16f; 6:19; Eph 2:20). Translators have used the adjective *zōntos* as a modifier for God (i.e. "living God"), but that seems redundant, not to mention grammatically unsound. The focus is on the vibrant fellowship believers share in common in Christ; thus "we are the living temple of God."

The flow of the rhetorical questions also highlights some similarities. The binding together of believers is defined as a partnership, a fellowship, a harmonizing (or, mutual consent; as in 1 Cor 7:5), a sharing in common, and an agreement. In addition, that which binds them together is marked by righteousness, light, belief or faith, and being a living temple. At the center of the chiasm is Christ, the heart of their mutuality. The opposite is also presented, with Beliar (Satan) at the heart of that which Paul defines as lawlessness, darkness, unbelief, and idolatry. Thus, in contrast to the lifeless unbeliever, who is ignorant to sin, engulfed by darkness which renders sight impossible, and who wastes life for a carved piece of wood or metal, against that stand the believers with their minds and hearts opened to the glory of God, portrayed as a magnificent, living, breathing dwelling place for God. What companionship could there ever be between the two?

Paul does not leave the argument to rest on his words alone, but draws on the scriptural (i.e. OT) promises of God, from which he makes his case. If reconciliation is to be found, it must be grounded in having been formed together into a unified community by the Lord. This community is presented here as God with his chosen people, and also as a father with his children. These benign scenes of nurture and protection are possible only if both parties do their parts. The divine promises require human responsibility.

**6:16b-18** The concept of God making his dwelling among humanity, a plan which has been unfolding throughout history, can be traced through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation.<sup>7</sup> God first establishes a covenant "to be God" to Abraham and his descendants (Gen 17:7), which expands to being the God of all Israel, thus enabling them to know *YHWH*, but not yet to be his people (Ex 6:7). To the exiles, God declares he will make his dwelling place among them, and he will be their God and they will be his people (Ez 37:27). With the coming of Christ, the first part of that promise becomes a reality (Jn 1:14). By faith it becomes actualized in one's heart (Eph 3:17). And with the new heaven and earth, the promise will become sight (Rev 21:3).

A holy God requires a holy people. God has made his home among his people, but there are demands he places upon humans in order to make them an acceptable dwelling place. They are physically to separate themselves from those pagans with whom they have lived, and not to touch any unclean thing or person (i.e. anything which has no relationship with God). The original message, spoken to the remnant in Babylonian exile (Is 52:11), is still appropriate to those believers living among their pagan neighbors in Corinth.

A final phrase from Isaiah is omitted here, explaining that they were not to touch what is unclean because they were responsible for carrying sacred items. This was clear to Paul when he stated he was called out and set apart for the sake of the Gospel (Rom 1:1). Here, the imperative form of the verb *aphoristhēte*,<sup>8</sup> "be set apart," is aorist passive, and could imply that God has done the appointing, the setting apart, perhaps even before birth (Gal 1:15), and one merely receives it. Then consecration would involve both a divine ordaining, as well as an acceptance of the calling. Still, to be accepted, welcomed, received by a holy God, it is imperative to make a lifestyle choice that would remove oneself from one's former way of life, no longer handling those things which have no place in the life of one who is divinely appointed for service. The purification speaks both to activities ("come out from their midst"; "do not take hold of"), and mindset ("be set apart").

The essence of the first promise is paralleled, but now with the more personal twist of God being a father and his audience being his children. The original was a sign of God's faithfulness, a fulfillment of the Davidic covenant (2 Sam 7:14), and would have had, for a strong patriarchal society, a sense of authority and power, as well as nurture and protection. Perhaps Paul is alluding to an earlier declaration of having become himself a father to the Corinthians (1 Cor 4:15), thus making a plea for them to be as his children, that is, a plea for reconciliation.

Adding to this, Paul builds in a concept from Joel 2:28-32, that in the end times God will cross gender barriers, and pour out his Spirit on sons and daughters. Paul had already written elsewhere that in Christ all are one (Gal 3:28), and no separation should hinder their fellowship. Perhaps this is a special plea to women in the Corinthian church offended by Paul's charge in his first letter that they keep silent in their meetings (1 Cor 14:34f).

Finally, the entire working of God's promises from the OT passages is punctuated by a threefold reminder (vv. 16, 17, 18) that it is God who originally spoke and desires holy fellowship. For his part, Paul is only acting as his free-speaking mouthpiece (v.11).<sup>9</sup> The three phrases function as an *inclusio* and also a focal point at the center of the quotations, and serve to underscore the authority Paul has to address them.



Paul makes one last appeal to the Corinthians using all his rhetorical tools: reason (*logos*), emotion (*pathos*), and goodwill (*ethos*).<sup>10</sup> The logical conclusion to these promises is to do what God requires in order to appropriate them. Paul's use of *agapētoi* is an address of endearment. This is followed by the hortatory subjunctive in the first person plural; Paul is including himself with his audience in this call to purify themselves from anything that defiles body and soul. For Paul, the term *sarx* usually means the flesh nature, something to be put off because of its proclivity to sin. But here there is a sense of the whole person, one's essence and activities. This, juxtaposed with the participle "perfecting holiness," suggests that both the physical and spiritual are necessary components in working out one's salvation (with fear and trembling, Phil 2:12). There is a mutuality between the two, so that what happens bodily has consequences for the soul and what takes place in the spiritual realm effects the physical. The dual participles, "having the promises" and perfecting holiness," underscore this mutuality: God's work/promises, and our work/consecration to him.

That which deadens and divides is sin. Participation in anything that has no relationship with God threatens to corrupt the body as well as the soul. Paul provides guidelines, principles, and a way of thinking, rather than solutions or rules. The hearers and readers of his letters must work with his words to determine how they shall be interpreted and applied to daily life.

God's plan throughout history has been to reconcile humanity to himself, that both might share in holy fellowship. There is a harmonious unity that can be found in Christ. But partnering with him will cost everything that smacks of self-promotion, which always comes at the expense of others. This unity happens when each considers the need of others before his or her own. For it is not just my own defilement that is my concern, but that of my brothers and sisters. That living temple is only as strong as its weakest stone. We receive God's promises collectively, and we purify ourselves, perfecting holiness together as one body. When we see our relationship to God clearly, that is as siblings of a divine father, we cannot help but see ourselves (i.e. our attraction to the things of the world), and our interrelatedness (for better or worse) more clearly. Those grudges we might hold against each other or those secret sins, we think they might affect no one but ourselves. But if they are harmful to one, they are harmful for all and should be left behind, that in the light of truth and love we might edify each other, and serve our heavenly Father.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> John Moray, *Archaeology and the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 315.

<sup>2</sup> Larry Kreitzer, *2 Corinthians* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 35. The

author argues for these five letters.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Fitzmyer, "Qumran and the Interpolation Paragraph in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 23 (1961), 271-80. The author claims the following are particular literary devices stemming from the Qumran community: 1) triple dualism; 2) the opposition to idols; 3) the community as the Holy of Holies; 4) separation from all impurity; 5) the idea of the "lot" of God's chosen people; 6) the stringing together of OT texts around a theme to form a *testimonia* (e.g. Rom 3:10-18; 9:25-29; 10:15-21; 11:8-10; 15:9-12).

<sup>4</sup> Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 402f.

<sup>5</sup> Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. VII, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967; reprint 1973), 442.

<sup>6</sup> J.D. Douglas, ed., *New Bible Dictionary* 2d ed. (Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1982; reprint 1996), s.v. Belial by D.F. Payne.

<sup>7</sup> Simon J. Kistemaker, *II Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 231f.

<sup>8</sup> In the (MT) Hebrew (from Isaiah 52) the same verb, *hibaru*, is a Ni'fal imperative and has a reflexive meaning, "purify yourselves." The OT concept of purification addresses both the condition of the heart, or intention, as well as the hands, or ethical acts. Both are necessary, with inner purity and outward purity being mutual expressions of each other. Johannes G. Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 311. The mutual reciprocity of covenant may also be implied here (both words come from the same root, *bar*), with both parties responsible to and benefitting from the inward and outward purification of God's chosen people.

<sup>9</sup> The third reference to divine authorship addresses God as Lord Almighty (*kurios pantokratōr*), a singular combination of titles (Hebrew would read *YHWH Shaddai*) which appears nowhere else in the Bible.

<sup>10</sup> For further reading on rhetorical analysis see Rodney K. Duke, *The Persuasive Appeal of the Chronicler: A Rhetorical Analysis* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1990); also Martin Warner, ed. *The Bible as Rhetoric: Studies in Biblical Persuasion and Credibility* (London: Routledge, 1990).

**Patronage and Reciprocity:  
The Context of Grace in the New Testament**  
David A. deSilva\*

The term “patronage” refers to a system in which access to goods, positions, or services is enjoyed by means of personal relationships and the exchanging of “favors” rather than by impersonal and impartial systems of distribution. People in the United States and Northern Europe may be culturally conditioned to find the concept of patronage distasteful at first, and not at all a suitable metaphor for talking about God’s relationship to us. When we say “it’s not what you know but whom you know,” it is usually because we sense someone has had an unfair advantage over us or over the friend whom we console with these words. It violates our conviction that everyone should have equal access to employment opportunities (being evaluated on the basis of pertinent skills rather than personal connection) or to services offered by private businesses or civic agencies.<sup>1</sup> Where patronage occurs (often deridingly called nepotism: channeling opportunities to relations or personal friends), it is often done “under the table” and kept as quiet as possible.<sup>2</sup>

We tend to get what we need or want by means of buying and selling, where exchange is precisely measured out ahead of time. You do not leave a department store owing the sales person a favor, nor does the cashier at a restaurant owe me a good turn for the money I gave after dinner. When we seek employment, most often we are hired on the basis of our skills and experience by people we do not know. We prepare for employment not so much by cultivating “connections” (although this is still useful!) as by equipping ourselves with the knowledge and skills that, we hope, a potential employer will recognize as giving us the necessary resources to do the job well. When we fall into hard times, there is a massive public welfare system in place, access to which is offered not as a personal favor but as a bureaucratized “right” of the poor or unemployed. If an alien wants citizenship and the rights that go along with it, he or she applies and undergoes the same process as every other naturalized citizen — it is not a favor granted personally by an individual in power.

The world of the authors and readers of the New Testament, however, was a world in which personal patronage was an essential means of acquiring access to goods, protection, or opportunities for employment and advancement. Not only was it essential — it was expected and publicized! The giving and

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receiving of favors was, according to a first-century participant, the “practice that constitutes the chief bond of human society” (Seneca, *De beneficiis* 1.4.2). To enter their world and hear their words more authentically, we have to leave behind our cultural norms and ways of doing things and learn a quite different way of managing resources and meeting needs.

### Patronage and Friendship

For everyday needs there was the market, in which buying and selling provided access to daily necessities; for anything outside of the ordinary, one sought out the person who possessed or controlled access to what one needed, and received what one needed as a “favor.” The ancient world from the classical through the Roman periods was one of greatly limited access to goods. The greater part of the property, wealth, and power was concentrated into the hands of the few, and access to these goods was through personal connection rather than bureaucratic channels. The kinds of benefits sought from patrons depended on the need or desires of the petitioner: they might include plots of land or distributions of money to get started in business or to supply food after a crop failure or failed business venture, protection, debt relief, or an appointment to some office or position in government. “Help one person with money, another with credit, another with influence, another with advice, another with sound precepts” (Seneca, *Ben.* 1.2.4; LCL). If the patron granted the petition, the petitioner would become the client of the patron and a potentially long-term relationship would begin.<sup>3</sup> This relationship would be marked by the mutual exchange of desired goods and services, the patron being available for assistance in the future, the client doing everything in his or her power to enhance the fame and honor of the patron (publicizing the benefit and showing the patron respect), remaining loyal to the patron, and providing services whenever the opportunity arose.

Sometimes the most important gift a patron could give was access to (and influence with) another patron who actually had power over the benefit being sought. For the sake of clarity, a patron who provides access to another patron for his or her client has been called a “broker”<sup>4</sup> (a classical term for this was “mediator”). Brokerage was commonplace and expected in public life. Sophocles (*Oedipus Tyrannus* 771-774) provides a fictional example of this in the words of Creon in his defense against Oedipus’ charge of conspiracy to usurp the kingship:

I am welcome everywhere; every man salutes me,  
And those who want your favor seek my ear,  
Since I know how to manage what they ask.

Creon enjoys high esteem and displays of public reputation on the basis of his ability to grant or withhold his single resource: access to King Oedipus and thus

to royal favors.

Numerous examples of brokerage can be found in the letters of Cicero, Pliny the Younger, and Fronto, correspondence providing windows into public policy from the late Republic through the second century of the Empire.<sup>5</sup> Pliny's letters to the emperor Trajan (dating from 111-113AD, the time during which Pliny was governor of Bithynia) contain attempts by Pliny to procure imperial favors for his own friends and clients. In one such letter (*Ep.* 10.4), Pliny introduces a client of his, named Voconius Romanus, to Trajan with a view to getting Voconius a senatorial appointment. He addresses Trajan clearly as a client addressing his patron, and proceeds to ask a favor for Voconius. Pliny offers his own character as a guarantee of his client's character, and Trajan's "favorable judgement" of Pliny (not Voconius, whom he does not know) would become the basis for Trajan's granting of this favor. Should the favor be granted by the emperor, Voconius would be indebted not only to Trajan but also to Pliny, who will, in turn, be indebted further to Trajan.<sup>6</sup> The broker, or mediator, at the same time incurs a debt and increases his own honor through the indebtedness of his or her client. Brokerage — the gift of access to another, often greater, patron — was in itself a highly valued benefit. Without such connections, the client would never have had access to what he or she desired or needed. This is especially apparent in the case of Pliny's physical therapist, Arpocras, who gains both Roman and Alexandrian citizenship by means of Pliny, who petitions Trajan on his behalf (*Ep.* 10.5-7, 10). Pliny gives this local physician access to the emperor, the fount of patronage, which he would never have enjoyed otherwise. Brokerage could even intervene in the judicial process. Both Cicero<sup>7</sup> and Marcus Aurelius (*Ad M. Caes.* 3.2) use their connections of friendship with a judge to secure favorable outcomes for their clients, on whose behalf they write.

So far we have been discussing personal patronage as it occurred between people of unequal social status: someone of lesser power, honor, and wealth seeks out the aid of a person of superior power, honor, and wealth. The kinds of benefits exchanged between such people will be different in kind and quality, the patron providing material gifts or opportunities for advancement, the client contributing to the patron's reputation and power base. Relationships of reciprocity also occur between social equals, people of like means who can exchange like resources, neither one being seen by the other or by society as the inferior of the other. Such relationships went by the name of "friendship."<sup>8</sup> The basic ethos undergirding this relationship, however, is no different from that of the relationship of patrons and clients: the same principal of reciprocity and mutual fidelity is the bedrock of both. Moreover, because patrons were sensitive to the honor of their clients, they rarely called their clients by that name. Instead, they "graciously" referred to them as "friends," even though

they were far from social equals. Clients, on the whole, did not attempt to hide their junior status, referring to their patrons as “patrons” rather than as “friends” so as to highlight the honor and respect with which they esteemed their benefactors.<sup>9</sup> Where we see people called “friends” or “partners,” therefore, we should suspect that we are still looking at relationships of reciprocity.

### Patronage among the Poor

The greater part of the ancient population has left no written legacy for us to study. Observation of modern agrarian societies leads scholars to believe that all classes participated, in their own ways, in forming relationships of reciprocity. One such cultural anthropologist, Julian Pitt-Rivers, studied the rural communities of Southern France,<sup>10</sup> noting that neighbors are always ready to help one another at harvest or sheep-shearing time, not for money or for specific returns. While the helper would even publicly deny that he has placed the helped party under obligation, should the latter refuse to help others it would be remembered and become a blot on that farmer’s reputation as a “good neighbor”:

Great prestige attaches to a good reputation as a neighbor. Everyone would like to be in credit with everybody and those who show reluctance to lend a hand when they are asked to do so soon acquire a bad reputation which is commented on by innuendo. Those who fail to return the favor done to them come to be excluded from the system altogether. Those of good repute can be sure of compliance on all sides.<sup>11</sup>

Even in the rural areas, there are those who do more favors than receive favors, and these become local patrons of a sort. This situation bears remarkable resemblance to the discussion of reciprocity among farmers in Hesiod’s *Works and Days*, written in the sixth century BC.<sup>12</sup>

Pitt-Rivers advances another motive for helping when help is needed, and that is “insurance” against the time when one might, oneself, rely on the neighbors to get through a difficult crisis, to which “a single family farm is particularly vulnerable.”<sup>13</sup> Seneca had seen this as an essential aspect of the system of reciprocity two millennia before: “how else do we live in security if it is not that we help each other by an exchange of good offices? It is only through the interchange of benefits that life becomes in some measure equipped and fortified against sudden disasters. Take us singly, and what are we? The prey of all creatures....” (*Ben.* 4.18.1). We may conclude then, that those who left us no direct testimony — namely peasant farmers and local artisans — also entered into relationships of reciprocity and sought to fulfill their part of the relationship nobly as the means both to local honor and security.



### Public Benefaction

Personal patronage was not the only form of beneficence in the ancient world. Most public entertainments, whether religious festivals and feasts or local athletic competitions, were “given” to the inhabitants of the city by wealthy benefactors. Moreover, most civic improvements, whether temples or theaters, pavements or porticoes, were also the gifts either local elites or wealthy persons abroad who wished to confer benefits on a famous city (as Herod the Great provided the money for buildings not only in Jerusalem but also Rhodes, Athens, and Sparta).<sup>14</sup> In times of crisis, wealthy benefactors would come to the aid of the public, providing, for example, famine or disaster relief. Public benefaction was an arena open to both men and women of means.<sup>15</sup>

Such public gifts did not make every recipient a “client” of the benefactor,<sup>16</sup> for lines were drawn between personal patronage and public munificence, but the public as a whole was nevertheless still indebted to that benefactor.<sup>17</sup> In general, the response of the grateful city would consist of the conferral of public honors (like crowning at a prominent public festival, special seating at games) and the provision for a permanent commemoration of the generosity of the giver in the form of honorary inscriptions or, in special cases, statues. Inscriptions across the Mediterranean from North Africa to Greece, Asia and Egypt bear witness to the phenomenon of both personal patronage and public benefaction.<sup>18</sup>

The most powerful figures in the ancient world, namely kings and emperors, frequently granted public benefactions to cities or even whole provinces in addition to the numerous personal benefactions by which they bound to themselves their client base. Relief from oppression, whether from an extortionate local official, from pirates on the sea, or from a hostile force from outside would be a benefaction especially well-suited for an emperor to give. Pardon for crimes committed was also reserved for kings and emperors, who were also credited with doing the broad public a great service if peace and stability characterized their rule. The extreme form of response to benefactions from rulers was the offering of worship. Those who gave gifts usually besought from the gods were judged to be worthy of the honors offered the gods. When the Athenians greeted their general, Demetrius Poliorketes, who had just freed them from foreign domination in 307 BC, they used cultic language: “other deities are far away, or have no ears, or are not, or have no care for us at all: but you we see here present — not shaped by wood or stone but in reality. And so to you we pray: First bring us peace, for you possess the power.”<sup>19</sup>

A similar picture emerges from Nicolaus of Damascus’ first-hand observations concerning the origin of the cult of Augustus: “all people address

him [as Augustus] in accordance with their estimation of his honor, revering him with temples and sacrifices across islands and continents, organized in cities and provinces, matching the greatness of his virtue and repaying his benefactions towards them.”<sup>20</sup> The “peace of Augustus” was viewed as relief of divine proportions, and the return of thanks must be equal to the gift. Augustus thus succeeded in the East to the tradition of according divine honors to benefactors, generals, and, during the Roman Republic, governors. The imperial cult also provided people in the province with a bridge of access to their ultimate patron. Provinces sought imperial aid (benefactions) through the mediation of the priests of the imperial cult, who both officiated in the province, and became the official ambassadors to Rome on behalf of the province. Sending the priests of imperial cultic honors to Rome put the province in the most positive light. The priest was an image of the province’s uncompromising loyalty and gratitude, so that the province could be assured for ongoing favor.

### Patronage in Greek and Roman Settings

Patronage is not strictly a Roman phenomenon, even though our richest discussions of the institution were written by Romans (Cicero in *De officiis* and Seneca in *De beneficiis*). Both public benefaction and personal patronage are well-attested in both Greek and Roman cultures. Only during the time of the Athenian democracy is there an attempt to move away from patronage as the basic model for structuring society.<sup>21</sup> From before the Democratic Revolution of 462 BC, we have the example of Cimon of Athens, whose provision of personal patronage to needy suppliants as well as gifts to the city in general win him the status of “first citizen” and result in his “election” to the generalship for seventeen consecutive years.<sup>22</sup> Throughout the period of the democracy itself, the avoidance of open patronage applied only between citizens, whose freedom should not be compromised out of a need to gratify a potential or past benefactor. The non-citizens (called “metics,” or “resident aliens”) were *required* to have a sponsor or patron (a *prostatēs*) who would provide access to the institutions of the city for the non-citizen.<sup>23</sup>

By the time that Philip of Macedon and his son, Alexander, rise to prominence, however, personal patronage is once again openly spoken of in Athens. Demosthenes, an orator who died in 322 BC, speaks openly both of his public benefactions (fortification of the city walls), which he deems worthy of gratitude and public honor, and his private acts of patronage to the distressed and financially challenged (*De corona* 268-69, 299). Aristotle speaks in his *Nicomachian Ethics* (1163b1-5, 12-18) of the type of friendship in which one partner receives the larger share of honor and acclamation, the other partner the larger share of material assistance — clearly a reference to personal patronage

between people of unequal social status. By the first century AD, the attempt at Athens to restrict personal patronage is but a distant memory, an exception to an unobjectionable rule.

Greek and Latin authors from the Hellenistic and Roman periods express a shared ethos where friendship, patronage, and public benefaction are concerned, as we shall see below. Aristotle and Seneca, Dio and Cicero, agree concerning what guidelines the giver and recipient should follow. Moreover, as the Greek world is transformed into the provinces of the Roman Empire, Greek cities no less than Roman colonies become acquainted with patronage as the means by which the whole city gets connected with the center of power and resources, namely the emperor and senate of Rome. A Greek statesman like Plutarch, instructing aspiring politicians, discusses the advisability of having well-placed friends who can support and advance one's political agenda (*Mor.* 814C). The main difference between personal patronage in the Greek and Roman cultures is the formalized etiquette surrounding the latter in the morning greeting of the patron by his or her clients. The *salutatio* displayed the relationship of patron and clients visibly and publicly, a display that would continue throughout the day as some number of clients accompanied the patron in public places, displaying the patron's prestige and power with a visible entourage at home and in the public spaces.<sup>24</sup> With this one difference (a difference which disappeared as Roman customs spread throughout their empire), patronage and benefaction proceeded in Greek and Roman circles with much the same ethos and expectations.

### **The social context of "Grace"**

We have looked closely and at some length at the relationships and activities which mark the patron-client relationship, friendship, or public benefaction, because these are the social contexts in which the word "grace" (*charis*) is at home in the first century AD. Today, "grace" is primarily a religious word, heard only in churches and Christian circles. It has progressed through millennia of theological reflection, developments, and accretions (witness the multiplication of terms like "justifying grace," "sanctifying grace," and "prevenient grace" in Christian theology, systematizing the order of salvation). For the actual writers and readers of the New Testament, however, "grace" was not primarily a religious, as opposed to secular, word: rather it was used to speak of reciprocity among human beings and between mortals and God (or, in pagan literature, the gods). This single word encapsulated the entire ethos of the relationships we have been describing.

First, "grace" was used to refer to the willingness of a patron to grant some benefit to another person or to a group. In this sense, it means "favor," in the sense of "favorable disposition." In Aristotle's words (*Rhetoric* 2.7.1



[1385a16-20]), "Grace (*charis*) may be defined as helpfulness toward someone in need, not in return for anything, nor for the advantage of the helper himself [or herself], but for that of the person helped."<sup>25</sup> In this sense, the word highlights the generosity and disposition of the patron, benefactor, or giver. The same word carries a second sense, often being used to denote the "gift" itself, that is, the result of the giver's beneficent feelings.<sup>26</sup> Many honorary inscriptions mention the "graces" (*charitas*) of the benefactor as the cause for conferring public praise, emphasizing the real and received products of the benefactor's good will toward a city or group.<sup>27</sup> Finally, "grace" can be used to speak of the response to a benefactor and his or her gifts, namely "gratitude." Demosthenes provides a helpful window into this aspect in his *De corona* as he chides his audience for not responding honorably to those who have helped them in the past: "but you are so ungrateful (*acharistos*) and wicked by nature that, having been made free out of slavery and wealthy out of poverty by these people, you do not show gratitude (*charin echeis*) toward them but rather enriched yourself by taking action against them" (*De corona* 131).<sup>28</sup> "Grace" thus has very specific meanings for the authors and readers of the New Testament, meanings derived primarily from the use of the word in the context of the giving of benefits and the requiting of favors.

The fact that one and the same word can be used to speak of a beneficent act and the response to a beneficent act suggests implicitly what many moralists from the Greek and Roman cultures stated explicitly: "grace" must be met with "grace," favor must always give birth to favor,<sup>29</sup> gift must always be met with gratitude. An image that captured this ethos for the ancients was three goddesses, the three "Graces," dancing hand-in-hand in a circle. Seneca's explanation of the image is most revealing:

Some would have it appear that there is one for bestowing a benefit, one for receiving it, and a third for returning it; others hold that there are three classes of benefactors — those who receive benefits, those who return them, those who receive and return them at the same time.... Why do the sisters hand in hand dance in a ring which returns upon itself? For the reason that a benefit passing in its course from hand to hand returns nevertheless to the giver; *the beauty of the whole is destroyed if the course is anywhere broken*, and it has most beauty if it is continuous and maintains an uninterrupted succession.... Their faces are cheerful, as are ordinarily the faces of those who bestow or receive benefits. They are young because the memory of benefits ought not to grow old. They are maidens because benefits are pure and holy and undefiled in the eyes of all; [their robes] are

transparent because benefits desire to be seen (*Ben.* 1.3.2-5; LCL, emphasis mine).

From this, and many other ancient witnesses, we learn that there is no such thing as an isolated act of "grace." An act of favor and its manifestation (the gift) initiate a circle dance in which the recipients of favor and gifts must "return the favor," that is, give again to the giver (both in terms of a generous disposition and in terms of some gift, whether material or otherwise). Only a gift required is a gift well and nobly received. To fail to return favor for favor is, in effect, to break off the dance and destroy the beauty of the gracious act.

In what follows, we will look closely at how Greek and Roman authors conceived of well executed grace-exchanges first in relation to the giver and then in relation to the recipient.

### Showing Favor (Grace)

Generosity was a highly valued characteristic in people in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Most public works, public festivals and entertainments, and private aid to individuals or groups came through the willingness of generous people of means to spend their wealth on others. Because their assistance was essential in so many ways, there were strong social sanctions against violating the expectations of gratitude (see below), violations that threatened to cut off the source of aid or redirect that aid in more promising directions.

There were also clear codes of conduct for the giver as well, guidelines that sought to preserve, in theory at least, the nobility and purity of a generous act. First, ancient ethicists spoke much of the motives that should guide the benefactor or patron. Aristotle's definition of "grace" in its first sense (the generous disposition of the giver), quoted above, underscores the fact that a giver must act not from self-interest but in the interest of the recipient.<sup>30</sup> If the motive is primarily self-interest, any sense of "favor" is nullified and with it the deep feelings and obligations of gratitude (Aristotle, *Nic. Eth.* 1385a35-1385b3). The Jewish sage, Yeshua Ben Sira, lampoons the ungraceful giver (*Sir* 20:13-16). This character gives not out the virtue of generosity but in anticipation of profit, and if the profit does not come immediately he considers his gifts to be thrown away and complains aloud about the ingratitude of the human race. Seneca also speaks censoriously of this character: "He who gives benefits imitates the gods, he who seeks a return, money-lenders" (*Ben.* 3.15.4).<sup>31</sup> The point is that the giver, if he or she gives nobly, never gives with an eye to what can be gained from the gift.<sup>32</sup> The giver does not give to an elderly person so as to be remembered in a will, or to an elected official with a view to getting some leverage in politics. Such people are investors, not benefactors or friends.

Gifts are not to be made with a view to having some desired object given in return, but gifts were still to be made strategically. According to Cicero, good gifts badly placed are badly given (*De officiis* 2.62). The shared advice of Isocrates, Ben Sira, Cicero, and Seneca is that the giver should scrutinize the person to whom he or she is thinking of giving a gift.<sup>33</sup> The recipient should be a virtuous person who will honor the generosity and kindness behind the gift, who would value more the continuing relationship with the giver than any particular gift. Especially poignant is Isocrates' advice: "Bestow your favors on the good; for a goodly treasure is a store of gratitude laid up in the heart of an honest man. If you benefit bad men, you will have the same reward as those who feed stray dogs; for these snarl alike at those who give them food and at the passing stranger; and just so base men wrong alike those who help them and those who harm them" (*To Demonicus* 29; LCL). An important component in deciding who will be a worthy recipient of one's gifts is his or track record of how he or she has responded to other givers in the past.<sup>34</sup> Has he or she responded nobly, with gratitude? He or she will probably be worthy of more favors. A reputation for knowing how to be grateful was, in effect, the ancient equivalent of a credit-rating.

Giving without advance calculation of a return and selecting one's beneficiaries carefully may at first glance appear to be contradictory principles. When Seneca writes that gifts given to the ungrateful are "thrown away" (*Ben.* 1.1.2), he may appear to intensify this contradiction. Aware of this potential misunderstanding, he writes: "I choose a person who will be grateful, not one who is likely to make a return, and it often happens that the grateful man is one who is not likely to make a return, while the ungrateful man is one who has made a return. It is to the heart that my estimate is directed" (*Ben.* 4.10.4). The noble giver evaluates his or her potential beneficiaries not in light of any actual return they might make — not in terms of the value of the gifts or services they might give in exchange in the future — but in light of the disposition of the recipient's heart toward feeling gratitude, appreciating and remembering the gift and making whatever return he or she is able, given his or her means. The patron's motive must be kept pure, that is, not sowing benefits for the sake of material gains or other temporal advantages, but looking only for the grateful heart irrespective of the means possessed by the potential recipient to "be of service" in the future.

The benefactor's favor was not, however, to be limited by the potential beneficiary's virtue (or lack thereof). Even while advising his readers to channel their resources first toward the deserving (that is, those who have given signs of a grateful character),<sup>35</sup> Seneca urges givers to remain as free as "the gods" in terms of their generosity. Benefaction was the initiation of the dance of grace, an action rather than a response, a perfect and self-contained act rather



than an act that depended on anything beyond the virtue and goodwill of the giver. Therefore, Seneca, would advise his readers, the human benefactor should imitate the "gods," by whose design "the sun rises also upon the wicked" and "rains" are provided for both good and bad (*Ben.* 4.26.1; 4.28.1), who follow the leading of their own generous and kind hearts in their dealings with human beings, both the grateful and the sacrilegious (*Ben.* 1.1.9).

A virtuous, human patron or benefactor, then, will be willing to grant public benefactions even though she or he knows that the ingrates will also derive enjoyment from the games, the public meals, the construction of a new theater. Seneca's lofty code for givers, however, applies also to personal patronage. A generous-hearted patron might even choose a known ingrate — even someone who has previously failed to show gratitude for a gift granted by this same patron — to receive a favor (Seneca, *Ben.* 1.10.5; 7.31.2, 4). Repeated acts of kindness, like a farmer's ongoing labor over difficult soil, may yet awaken a slow heart to show gratitude and respond nobly (Seneca, *Ben.* 7.32).

### Responding with Grace

As we have already seen in Seneca's allegory of the three "Graces," an act of favor must give rise to a response of gratitude — grace *must* answer grace, or else something beautiful will be defaced and turned into something ugly. According to Cicero, while initiating a gift was a matter of choice, gratitude was not optional for honorable people, but rather an absolute duty (*De Officiis* 1.47-48). Receiving a favor or kindness meant incurring very directly a "debt" or "obligation" to respond gratefully, a debt on which one could not default.<sup>36</sup> Seneca stresses the simultaneity of receiving a gift and an obligation: "The person who intends to be grateful, even while she or he is receiving, should turn his or her thoughts to returning the favor" (*Ben.* 2.25.3). Indeed, the virtuous person could seek to compete with the giver in terms of kindnesses and favor, trying not merely to "return" the favor but to return it with interest like the fruitful soil that bears crops far more abundant than the seeds that were scattered upon it.<sup>37</sup>

Gratitude towards one's patrons (or toward public benefactors) was a prominent example in discussions of what it meant to live out the cardinal virtue of "justice," a virtue defined as giving to each person what was his or her due. It was ranked in importance next to showing the gods, those supreme benefactors, the proper honor and services.<sup>38</sup> Failure to show gratitude, however, was classed as the worst of crimes, being compared to sacrilege against the gods, since the Graces were considered goddesses,<sup>39</sup> and being censured as an injury against the human race, since ingratitude discourages the very generosity that was so crucial to public life and to personal aid. Seneca

captures well the perilous nature of life in the first-century world and the need for firm tethers of friendship and patronage to secure one against mishap:

Ingratitude is something to be avoided in itself because there is nothing that so effectually disrupts and destroys the harmony of the human race as this vice. For how else do we live in security if it is not that we help each other by an exchange of good offices? It is only through the interchange of benefits that life becomes in some measure equipped and fortified against sudden disasters. Take us singly, and what are we? The prey of all creatures (*Ben.* 4.18.1; LCL).<sup>40</sup>

The ingrate committed a crime against the gods, humanity, and ultimately himself or herself, while the person who returned grace for grace embodied the highest virtues of piety and justice and was valued for contributing to the forward movement of the dance of grace on which so much depended.

Responding justly to one's benefactors was a behavior enforced not by written laws but rather "by unwritten customs and universal practice," with the result that a person known for gratitude would be considered praiseworthy and honorable by all, while the ingrate would be regarded as disgraceful.<sup>41</sup> There was no law for the prosecution of the person who failed to requite a favor (with the interesting exception of classical Macedonia), but, Seneca affirmed, the punishment of shame and hatred by all good people would more than make up for the lack of official sanctions.<sup>42</sup> Neglecting to return a kindness, forgetfulness of kindnesses already received in the past, and, most horrendous of all, repaying favor with insult or injury — these were courses of action to be avoided by an honorable person at *all* costs.<sup>43</sup> Rather, gifts were always to be remembered, commemorated first of all in the shrine of one's own mind, and always to be requited with gratitude. The social sanctions of honor and shame, therefore, were important bulwarks for the virtue of gratitude and exerted considerable pressure in this direction.

Practically speaking, responding with gratitude was also reinforced by the knowledge that if one has needed favors in the past, one most assuredly will still need favors and assistance in the future. As we have seen already, a reputation for gratitude is the best credit-line one can have in the ancient world, since patrons and benefactors, when selecting beneficiaries, would seek out those who knew how to be grateful. Even though benefactors might be moved to risk giving to a person whose reputation has been marred by ingratitude, since most benefactors' resources were limited they would seek out the worthy recipients first.<sup>44</sup> The person who "requisites favors," then, is commended by Ben Sira for his or her foresight, since he or she will not fail to find aid when needed in the future (*Sir* 3:31).

An extreme, yet surprisingly common, example of showing gratitude

with an eye to future favors comes to expression in honorary inscriptions. Several inscriptions proclaiming honors to public benefactors contained in Danker's collection make explicit the motive behind the inscription, namely "that all might know that we express appropriate appreciation to those who ... make us the beneficiaries of their philanthropies," and that other benefactors may confer their benefits in the assurance that "they shall receive appropriate gratitude" as well.<sup>45</sup> Seeing that these cities or groups provided for the honor and remembrance of their benefactors, other benefactors would be encouraged to channel their resources in their direction as well (even as the honored benefactor would be positively inclined to continue her or his beneficence).<sup>46</sup> The opposite would also be true, namely that those who have shown ingratitude to their patrons or benefactors should expect to be excluded from future favors, both by the insulted benefactor and by other potential patrons as well. Just as no one goes back to a merchant who has been discovered to cheat his customers, and as no one entrusts valuables to the safe-keeping of someone who has previously lost valuables entrusted to him, so "those who have insulted their benefactors will not be thought worthy of a favor (*charitos axios*) by anyone" (Dio, *Or.* 31.38, 65).

As we consider gratitude, then, we are presented with something of a paradox. Just as the favor was freely bestowed, so the response must be free and uncoerced. Nonetheless, that response is at the same time necessary and unavoidable for an honorable person who wishes to be known as such (and hence the recipient of favor in the future). Gratitude is never a formal obligation: there is no advance calculation of, or agreed upon, return for the gift given.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless the recipient of a favor knows that he or she stands under the necessity of returning favor when favor has been received. The element of "exchange" must settle into the background, being dominated instead by a sense of mutual favor, of mutual good will and generosity.<sup>48</sup>

### Manifestations of Gratitude

"Returning a favor" could take on many forms, depending on the nature of the gift and the relative economic and political clout of the parties concerned. Cities or associations would show their gratitude for public benefactions by providing for the public recognition (honoring and increasing the fame) of the giver and often memorializing the gift and the honors conferred by means of a public inscription or, in exceptional cases, a statue of the giver or other monument.<sup>49</sup>

Even in personal patronage (in which the parties are not on equal footing), however, public honor and testimony would comprise an important component of a grateful response. An early witness to this is Aristotle, who writes in his *Nicomachian Ethics* that "both parties should receive a larger



share from the friendship, but not a larger share of the same thing: the superior should receive the larger share of honor, the needy one the larger share of profit; for honor is the due reward of virtue and beneficence" ( 1163b1-5; LCL). Such a return, though of a very different kind, preserves the "friendship." Seneca emphasizes the public nature of the testimony that the recipient of a patron's gifts is to bear. Gratitude for, and pleasure at, receiving these gifts should be expressed "not merely in the hearing of the giver, but everywhere" (*Ben.* 2.22.1): "The greater the favour, the more earnestly must we express ourselves, resorting to such compliments as: ... 'I shall never be able to repay you my gratitude, but, at any rate, I shall not cease from declaring everywhere that I am unable to repay it'" (*Ben.* 2.24.4). Increasing the fame of the giver is part of the proper return for a benefit, and a gift that one is ashamed to acknowledge openly in the hearing of all one has no business accepting in the first place (*Ben.* 2.23.1).

These dynamics are also at work in Jewish literature with regard to formulating a proper response to God's favors, that is, with regard to answering the Psalmist's question "What shall I give back to the Lord for all his gifts to me?" (Ps 116:12). The psalmist answers his own question by enumerating the public testimonies he will give to God's fidelity and favor. Similarly, after God brings a happy ending to the many dangers and trials faced by Tobit and his family, the angel Raphael enjoins such public testimony to honor God as a fitting response: "Bless God and acknowledge him in the presence of all the living for the good things he has done for you.... With fitting honor declare to all people the deeds of God. Do not be slow to acknowledge him.... Reveal the works of God, and with fitting honor ... acknowledge him" (Tob 12:6-7; NRSV).<sup>50</sup>

A second component of gratitude as this comes to expression in relationships of personal patronage or friendship is loyalty to the giver, that is, showing gratitude and owning one's association with the giver even when fortunes turn and it becomes costly. Thus Seneca would write about gratitude that "if you wish to make a return for a favor, you must be willing to go into exile, or to pour forth your blood, or to undergo poverty, or, ... even to let your very innocence be stained and exposed to shameful slanders" (*Ep.* 81.27). Wallace-Hadrill writes that, despite the fact that, in theory, clients were expected to remain loyal to their patrons, in practice if a patron fell into political trouble or if his fortunes began to wane, his entourage of clients would evaporate.<sup>51</sup> Such practice, however, was contrary to the ideal of gratitude, according to which one would stand by (or under) one's patron and continue to live gratefully even if it cost one the future favors of others, or brought one into dangerous places and worked contrary to self-interest.<sup>52</sup> The person who disowned or dissociated himself from a patron because of self-interest was an

ingrate.

It is worth noting at this point that "faith" (Latin, *fides*; Greek, *pistis*) is a term also very much at home in patron-client and friendship relations, and had, like "grace," a variety of meanings as the context shifted from the patron's "faith" to the client's "faith." In one sense, "faith" meant "dependability." The patron needed to prove himself or herself reliable in providing the assistance he or she promised to grant; the client needed to "keep faith" as well, in the sense of showing loyalty and commitment to the patron and to his or her obligations of gratitude.<sup>53</sup> A second meaning is the more familiar sense of "trust": the client had to "trust" the good will and ability of the patron to whom he entrusted his need, that the latter would indeed perform what he promised,<sup>54</sup> while the benefactor would also have to trust the recipients to act nobly and make a grateful response. In Seneca's words, once a gift was given there was "no law [that can] restore you to your original estate — look only to the good faith (*fidem*) of the recipient" (*Ben.* 3.14.2).

The principal of loyalty meant that clients or friends would have to take care not to become entangles in webs of crossed loyalties. Although a person could have multiple patrons,<sup>55</sup> to have as patrons two people who were enemies or rivals of one another would place one in a dangerous position, since ultimately one would have to prove loyal and grateful to one but disloyal and ungrateful to the other. "No one can serve two masters" honorably in the context of these masters being at odds with one another, but if the masters are "friends" or bound to each other by some other means the client should be safe in receiving favors from both.

Finally, the grateful person would look for an occasion to bestow timely gifts or services. If we have shown forth our gratitude in the hearing of the patron and borne witness to the patron's virtue and generosity in the public halls, we have "repaid favor (the generous disposition of the giver) with favor (an equally gracious reception of the gift)," but for the actual gift one still "owes" an actual gift (*Seneca, Ben.* 2.35.1). Once again, people of similar authority and wealth ("friends") can exchange gifts similar in kind and value; clients, on the other hand, can offer services when called upon so to do or when they see the opportunity arise. Seneca especially seeks to cultivate a certain watchfulness on the part of the one who has been "indebted," urging him or her not to try to return the favor at the first possible moment (as if the debt weighed uncomfortably on one's shoulders), but to return the favor in the best possible moment, the moment in which the opportunity will be real and not manufactured (*Ben.* 6.41.1-2). The point of the gift, in the first place, was not, after all, to obtain a return but to create a "bond" that "binds two people together".

### The Dance of Grace

The careful reader may already have observed some apparent contradictions in the codes of "grace." Rather than make the system fall apart, these contrary principles result in a creative tension between the mindset that must guide the giver and the mindset that should direct the recipient of favor. As a pair of dancers must sometimes move in contrary directions for the dance to be beautiful (and to avoid crashing into one another), so the patron and client are each given their own chart of "steps" to follow in the dance of grace. Sometimes they move together, sometimes in contrary ways, all for the sake of preserving the freedom and nobility of the practice of giving and receiving benefits. Seneca is especially fond of bringing contrasting rules of conduct together, only to tell each party to forget that it knows, in effect, what the other party is thinking. Clients are advised to think one way, patrons another — and if these mindsets get mixed up or crossed, the beauty of reciprocity, the gracefulness of grace, becomes irreparably marred.

Speaking to the giver, Seneca says that "the book-keeping is simple — so much is paid out; if anything comes back, it is gain, if nothing comes back, there is no loss. I made the gift for the sake of giving" (*Ben.* 1.2.3). While the giver is to train his or her mind to give no thought to the return and never to think a gift "lost," the recipient is never allowed to forget his or her obligation and the absolute necessity of making a return (*Ben.* 2.25.3; 3.1.1). The point is that the giver should wholly be concerned with giving for the sake of the other, while the recipient should be concerned wholly with showing gratitude to the giver. If the recipient should say to himself, "she gave it for the sake of giving; I owe nothing," then the dance has turned sour and one partner has trampled the other's toes.

Many other examples of this double set of rules exist. The giver is told "to make no record of the amount," but the recipient is "to feel indebted for more than the amount" (*Ben.* 1.4.3); the giver should forget that the gift was given, the recipient should always remember that the gift was received (*Ben.* 2.10.4; see Demosthenes, *De corona* 269); the giver is not to mention the gift again, while the recipient is to publicize it as broadly as possible (*Ben.* 2.11.2). In cases where a recipient has taken great pains to try to return a benefit, being watchful and thoughtful for the opportunity but simply not finding a way to help one who is far greater than himself or herself, "the one should consider that he has received the return of his benefit, while the other should know that he has not returned it; the one should release the other, while the other should feel himself bound; the one should say, 'I have received,' the other, 'I still owe'" (*Ben.* 7.16.1-2).

The most dramatic contradiction exists between the denial that the ingrate can again hope to receive favors (*Dio, Or.* 31.38, 65) and the



exhortation of patrons to imitate the gods and give even to the unworthy and ungrateful (Seneca, *Ben.* 1.10.5; 7.31.2, 4; 7.32). What accounts for the contradiction? Simply, the different audience and situation. Seneca speaks to patrons in these passages, discoursing about the loftiest ideals for generosity; Dio speaks to recipients of favor, urging them to cease a specific practice that shows ingratitude toward their benefactors. The recipients of favor should not dwell too long on the possibility (perhaps even the obligation) of benefactors giving even to the ingrate, lest this lead them to excuse themselves from showing gratitude (especially when costly) and to presume upon the favor of the giver, favor that is never to be taken for granted. The patron should not, on the other hand, dwell too long on the impossibility of restoring the ingrate to favor, for different considerations are to guide him, namely generosity even to the undeserving.

Such mutually contradictory rules (forgetting and remembering, being silent and bearing witness, and the like) are constructed so as to keep the giver's mind wholly on what is noble about patronage (generosity, acting in the interest of others) and the recipient's mind wholly on what is noble for the client (namely making a full and rich return of gratitude for favors conferred). They are devised in order to sustain both parties' commitment to acting nobly within the system of reciprocity. The ultimate goal for these ancient ethicists, after all, was not perfect systematization, but virtuous conduct.

### **Patronage and Grace in the New Testament**

It was within this world where many relationships would be characterized in terms of patronage and friendship, and in which the wealthy were indeed known as "benefactors" (Lk 22:25), that Jesus' message took shape and that the good news of God's favor was taken out into the Mediterranean world. Not all relationships fell under this heading of "grace relationships," since there are many "contractual" relationships (e.g., between tenants and landlord, merchants, and the like) in which the return for goods, services, or privileges is spelled out in advance and not left to "goodwill." Nevertheless, Jesus and his first disciples moved among and within patronage and friendship networks, for patronage was as much at home on Palestinian soil as in Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt, Africa, and Rome. Centuries of living under Greek, then Ptolemaic, then Seleucid<sup>56</sup> and finally Roman domination<sup>57</sup> obliterated any hard and fast boundaries between "Palestinian" and "non-Palestinian" culture.

Moreover, after just a few years of incubation in Judea, Christianity began to spread through the urban centers of the Mediterranean world where there would be a consistently high level of exposure among all the Christians to public benefaction and public responses of gratitude, and among many

Christians to personal patronage. These would have been prominent aspects of the world which they inhabited, and even of the experiences they personally enjoyed. As Jews and Gentiles came to hear Paul or other missionaries celebrate the marvels of God's "grace" made available through Jesus, the "sole mediator" between God and humanity, they would have heard it in the context of so many inscriptions and other public declarations of the beneficence of great figures.<sup>58</sup> For such converts, God's "grace" (*charis*) would not be of a different kind than the "grace" with which they were already familiar: it would be understood as different only in quality and degree. Moreover, they would know that the reception of gifts "given freely" laid the recipients under obligation to respond with grace to match (insofar as possible), with the result that much exhortation in the New Testament falls within the scope of directing believers to a proper, "grateful response" to God's favor.<sup>59</sup>

Luke 7 provides us with a place to start as we consider the networks of grace relationships in operation within the pages of the New Testament:

A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy of having you do this for him, for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us." And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and the slave does it." When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health (7:2-10; NRSV).

The centurion is presented as a local benefactor, doing what benefactors frequently do — erecting a building for public use (here, a synagogue). Faced with the mortal illness of a member of his household, and made aware of Jesus' reputation as a healer (thus himself a broker of God's favors), he seeks assistance from Jesus whom he knows has the resources to meet the need. He does not go himself, for he is an outsider — a Gentile (and a Roman officer, at

that). Instead, he looks for someone who has some connection with Jesus, someone who might be better placed in the scheme of things to secure a favor from this Jewish healer. So he calls upon those whom he has benefitted, the local Jewish elders, who will be glad for this opportunity to do him a good service (to do a favor for one who has bestowed costly favors on the community). He knows they will do their best to plead his cause, and thinks that their being of the same race and, in effect, extended kinship group as Jesus will make success likely. Thus the centurion's beneficiaries return the favor by brokering access to someone who has what the centurion needs. When the Jewish elders approach Jesus, they are, in effect, asking for the favor. As mediators, they also provide testimony to the virtuous character of the man who will ultimately be the recipient of favor. Jesus agrees to the request. Then the centurion does something surprising. He sends some of his "friends" (either people of like status with whom he shares benefits or people of lesser status that are attached to him as their personal patron) to intercept Jesus. A local benefactor shows astonishing humility in his dealings with a transient Jewish healer, and shows exceptional trust in Jesus' ability to grant God's favors. The end result is that the Roman centurion receives from Jesus the gift he needed.<sup>60</sup>

Another text that prominently displays the cultural codes and dynamics of reciprocity is Paul's letter to Philemon, which speaks of past benefits conferred by Paul and Philemon and calls for a new gift, namely freeing Onesimus to join Paul. Although Paul lacks both property and a place in a community, he nevertheless claims to be able to exercise authority over Philemon on the basis of having brought Philemon the message of salvation, thus on the basis of having given a valuable benefit (Philem 8, 18). Philemon himself has been the benefactor of the Colossian Christians, seen in his opening up of his house to them (Philem 2) and in the generosity that has been the means by which "the hearts of the saints have been refreshed" (Philem 7), perhaps including material assistance offered Paul during the time of their acquaintance and after.

We find a mixture of grounds on which Paul bases his request: on the one hand, Paul claims authority to command Philemon's obedience as Paul's client (Philem 8, 14, 20);<sup>61</sup> on the other, he voices his preference to address Philemon as friend (Philem 1), co-worker, and partner, and only actually makes his request on that basis (Philem 9, 14, 17, 20), hoping now to "benefit" (Philem 20) from Philemon's continued generosity toward the saints, which has earned him much honor in the community. The gift (really, the "return") that Paul seeks is the company and help of Onesimus, Philemon's slave. Paul presents Onesimus as someone who can give Paul the kind of help and service that Philemon ought to be providing Paul (Philem 13), and Paul's mention of his own need (his age and his imprisonment, Philem 9) will both rouse



Philemon's feelings of friendship and desire to help as well as make failure to help a friend in such need the more reprehensible.

The situation is somewhat complicated by the fact that Onesimus has estranged himself from Philemon, running from his master and lodging with Paul.<sup>62</sup> This means that Paul must act first as mediator for Onesimus, first seeking to gain a benefit from his friend, Philemon, for his own client. Paul's mediation means that Philemon will no longer treat Onesimus as Onesimus deserves (that is, as a disobedient and troublesome slave), but will treat him as his patron, Paul, deserves. Any injury committed by Onesimus is to be written on Paul's account, which shows a very wide credit margin (Philem 18-19).<sup>63</sup> Paul's decision to return Onesimus with Paul's letter allows Philemon to act nobly and charitably toward both his new brother in the faith (Philem 16) and toward his partner and spiritual patron, first by welcoming Onesimus on Paul's merits (Philem 17) and then by releasing him to help Paul (Philem 13-14).

Philemon really does appear to be in a corner in this letter — Paul has left him little room to refuse his request! If he is to keep his reputation for generosity and for acting nobly in his relations of reciprocity (the public reading of the letter creates a court of reputation that will make this evaluation), he can only respond to Paul's request in the affirmative. Only then would his generosity bring him any credit at all in the community; if he refuses and Paul must command what he now asks, Philemon will either have to break with Paul or lose Onesimus anyway without gaining any honor as a benefactor and reliable friend.

Many other examples of favors being granted by local patrons or human benefactors being acknowledged exist in the New Testament.<sup>64</sup> These provide us with but a starting point for discovering the social codes of grace within the text. Of greater import is the manner in which New Testament authors conceptualize the involvement of God in human affairs as the involvement of a benefactor and a personal patron, how they understand Jesus' role within the framework of God's beneficence, and how they direct the recipient of God's gifts to respond to such "amazing grace." To these we now turn, concluding with an examination of how patronage within the Christian community is transformed into stewardship, so that God remains, in fact, "all in all."

### **God the Benefactor and Patron**

The opening and closing wishes in New Testament epistles are consistently for God's "grace" (favor) to be upon the recipients of the letter. God's grace (*charis*) would have been understood by the recipients of those epistles within the context of the meaning of usage of "grace" in everyday parlance: it is not a different species of *charis*, but rather derives its

meaningfulness as a kind of *charis* — one in which certain surprising qualities are displayed but also one with some important areas of continuity with “grace” in general.<sup>65</sup>

God has indebted all living beings by virtue of being the creator and sustainer of all life (Acts 14:17; 17:24-28; 1 Cor 8:6; Rev 4:9-11). From the moment one draws breath, one is bound to revere the God who gives breath (Rev 14:6-7).<sup>66</sup> Paul reminds his readers that no human being has ever made God a debtor: God is always the first giver who obligates us, “for from him and through him and to him are all things” (Rom 11:35-36; NRSV). This is why Jew and Gentile have exactly the same standing before God, namely recipients of the favor of the Gracious One, neither with a claim on God’s return of favor but both obligated to respond to God’s favor. It is precisely here, however, that humanity has failed. Neither Gentile nor Jew returned to God the reverence and service God merited, but even went so far as to insult God through blatant disobedience (Rom 1:18-2:24). Meeting God’s favor with insult, humanity incurred the anger of the one who had sought to benefit them.<sup>67</sup>

The New Testament authors, however, announce a new manifestation of God’s favor, an opportunity for deliverance from experiencing God’s wrath made available to all through Jesus the Christ (1 Tim 4:10). This beneficent act is presented as God’s fulfillment of longstanding promises made to Israel, presenting God as a reliable benefactor who has “kept faith” with his historic body of clients (Luke 1:54, 68-75; Acts 3:26; Rom 15:8). The songs of Mary and Zechariah in Luke’s infancy narratives are especially noteworthy as testimonies to God’s fidelity with regard to delivering the grants he had promised to Abraham and his descendants, expressed in terms familiar from decrees honoring contemporary emperors (bringing peace, deliverance from oppression, and the like).<sup>68</sup> Christians are repeatedly made aware that they are specially privileged to witness the working out of God’s provision for deliverance in Jesus — many great people of the past looked forward to the day when that gift would be given (Mt 13:16-17; Lk 10:23-24; 1 Pet 1:10-12).

An important component of the New Testament message about God’s beneficence is that, while having kept faith with Israel, God now invites all people to stand in his favor and enjoy his patronage. Recognition for God’s inclusion of the Gentiles within the sphere of his favor was not easily won in the early church, but eventually the church came to realize the breadth and scope of God’s generosity in this new act of favor. The specific gift of God in bestowing the Holy Spirit even on Gentiles was the decisive proof of God’s acceptance of the non-Jew into God’s favor (Acts 11:15-18; Gal 3:1-5; 3:28-4:7).<sup>69</sup> The experience of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the believers was understood as a gift from God that signified adoption into God’s family (Gal 4:5-6), the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham (Gal 3:14), the

restoration of peace and favor with God (Rom 5:5), and as a pledge of the future benefits God has prepared and will confer at the return of Jesus or after the believer's death (2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:13-14). The vibrant and vital presence of the Spirit was thus an important assurance to the church of God's favor toward them.

We come at last to what is surprising about God's grace. It is not that God gives "freely and uncoerced": every benefactor, in theory at least, did this.<sup>70</sup> God goes far beyond the high-water mark of generosity set by Seneca, which was for virtuous people to consider even giving to the ungrateful<sup>71</sup> (if they had resources to spare after benefitting the virtuous). To provide some modest assistance to those who had failed to be grateful in the past would be accounted a proof of great generosity, but God shows the supreme, fullest generosity (not just what God has to spare!) toward those who are God's enemies (not just ingrates, but those who have been actively hostile to God and God's desires). This is an outgrowth of God's determination to be "kind"<sup>72</sup> even "toward the ungrateful [*acharistous*] and the wicked" (Lk 6:35). God's selection of his enemies as beneficiaries of his most costly gift is one area in which God's favor truly stands out.<sup>73</sup>

A second aspect of God's favor that stands out is God's initiative in effecting reconciliation with those who have affronted God's honor. God does not wait for the offenders to make an overture, or to offer some token acknowledging their own disgrace and shame in acting against God in the first place. Rather, God sets aside his anger in setting forth Jesus, providing an opportunity for people to come into favor and escape the consequences of having previously acted as enemies (hence the choice of "deliverance," *sōtēria*, as a dominant image for God's gift). We will see below that Jesus is primarily presented in terms of a mediator or "broker" of access to God's favor, since he connects those who make themselves his clients to another patron; nevertheless, those images cannot make us ignore that even such a mediator is God's gift to the world, hence an evidence of God's initiative in forming this relationship (Rom 3:22-26; 5:8; 8:3-4; 2 Cor 5:18, 21; 1 Jn 4:10). The formation of this grace-relationship thus runs contrary to the normal stream of lower-echelon people seeking out brokers who can connect them with higher patrons.

God is guided in this generosity by the consideration of "his own reputation and arete" (2 Pet 1:3), a phrase that resonates again with honorary inscriptions, in which benefactors are said to demonstrate their virtuous character, or live up to their forebears' reputation for virtue, through their generosity.<sup>74</sup> The death of Jesus on behalf of humankind thus becomes a "demonstration of God's righteousness" (his character and virtue, Rom 1:16-17; 3:25-26), showing that God's generosity exceeds all expectations and upper limits and that God needs nothing from the sinner in order to act in accordance



with his own generous character. The early Christians are repeatedly admonished, however, to take such a demonstration of boundless generosity as God's single call to humankind at last to respond virtuously and wholeheartedly (most eloquently, 2 Pet 1:3-11), and never as an excuse to offend God further (Rom 6:1; Gal 5:1, 13).

God not only dispenses general (rather than personal) benefactions like the grant of life to all creatures (Acts 14:17) or gifts of sun and rain (Matt 5:45)<sup>75</sup> but becomes a personal patron to the Christians who receive his Son. These believers become part of God's own household<sup>76</sup> and enjoy a special access to divine favors. The rich and well-placed were careful in their choice of friends and clients: while they might provide meals, games, or buildings for the public (benefaction), they did not accept any and all as clients (personal patronage). Rather distinctive about God's favor is that he offers to any who will come (thus in the form of a public benefaction), without prior scrutiny of the character and reliability of the recipients, the assurance of welcome into God's own extended household (thus into a relationship of personal patronage) — even to the point of adoption into God's family as sons and daughters and to the point of sharing the inheritance of the Son (which is exceptional even in personal patronage).<sup>77</sup> The authors of the New Testament therefore offer attachment to God as personal patron, something that would be considered highly desirable for those in need of the security and protection a great patron would provide.<sup>78</sup>

As God proved reliable in his promises to Israel, so God will prove reliable toward the Christians who have trusted his promises and welcomed his invitation to become God's clients (1 Thess 5:23-24; 2 Tim 1:12; Tit 1:2; Heb 10:23). Paul speaks thus about God being responsible for rescuing him from past distress, about his confidence of personal help in future trials, about God assisting and multiplying his labors, and the like.<sup>79</sup> Each Christian also enjoys this assurance that God is open to hearing specific petitions from individuals or local communities of faith, and the privilege of access to God for such timely and specific help (Eph 3:20; Phil 4:6-7, 19; 2 Thess 3:3; Heb 13:5-6; 1 Pet 5:7). Christians need never falter in their commitment to Jesus or release their grasp on God's final rewards because of the hostility or pressures applied by unbelievers: rather, they may "hold fast their confession" as they "approach the throne of favor with boldness," so as to "receive mercy and find favor for timely help" (Heb 4:14-16).<sup>80</sup>

Christian scriptures are unanimous in affirming that God's favor and help are assured, so that trust is justified and only appropriate. Romans 8:32 is perhaps the most poignant assurance of ongoing favor: what assistance or favor would God withhold from us, after having given up his Son on our behalf even before we were reconciled?<sup>81</sup> Jesus taught that God had knowledge of his

clients' needs and exercised forethought to provide both for their physical and eternal well-being (Mt 6:7-8; 6:25-33).<sup>82</sup> Jesus did not, however, discourage prayer in spite of God's knowledge, and the rest of the New Testament authors either promote prayer as the means to securing divine favors or display prayer as effective (e.g., Lk 1:13). Why pray if God already knows our needs? Because God delights to grant favors to those who belong to God's household. When we ask, we also have the opportunity to know the "blessed experience" of gratitude<sup>83</sup> and live out our response (in fact, be ennobled by feeling grateful and responding to God's grace). The result of the offering of prayers and God's answering of petitions is thanksgiving "from many mouths," the increase of God's honor and reputation for generosity and beneficence (2 Cor 1:11). Prayer becomes, then, the means by which believers can personally seek God's favor, and request specific benefactions, for themselves or on behalf of one another.<sup>84</sup>

God's patronage of the Christian community is also evidenced in the growth and building up of the churches and their members. The thanksgiving sections of Paul's letters attribute all progress as disciples and as communities of faith to God's gifting and equipping (1 Cor 1:5-7; Col 1:3-4; 1 Thess 1:2; 2 Thess 1:3; 1 Tim 1:3-6). As churches or their leaders "take stock" of what has been accomplished in their midst, it becomes a time to return thanks and honor to the God who accomplishes every good work. God bestows spiritual and material endowments on individual believers to be used for the health and strengthening of the whole church (1 Cor 12:1-11, 18; 14:12; Eph 4:1-12). Even monetary contributions made by Christians to churches or other works of charity are now seen as God's provision for the Body and not the means by which local patrons (or would-be patrons) can make a power base out of the church (the recipients of their favors).

God is presented in the New Testament, then, as the source of many gifts (indeed, of "every good and complete gift," Jas 1:17) in connection with Jesus. From the gift of life and provision of all things needed for the sustaining of life to the provision for people to exchange enmity with God for a place in God's household and under God's personal patronage, God is the one who supplies our lack, who gives assistance in our need. Nor does God's favor exist for this life only. The announcement of God's "year of favor" includes being chosen by God and being made holy (2 Thess 2:19; 1 Pet 1:1-2), given a new birth into a new family and heritage (Jn 1:12-13; Jas 1:18), and qualified to share in an eternal inheritance (Col 1:12), which is deliverance itself (Col 1:13). When the day of God's reckoning arrives, God will vindicate his clients in the face of all the shame and abuse they suffered at the hands of those who refused favor, for God protects the honor of his household by avenging wrongs done to them (Luke 18:1-8; 2 Thess 1:6), but those who have committed themselves

to God in trust and gratitude will receive their unshakable kingdom (Heb 12:28).

### **Jesus, the Mediator of God's Favor**

While Jesus is "put forward" by God (Rom 3:25) as a provision for reconciliation, and thus a gift from God, he is cast more frequently in the New Testament in the role of Mediator of God's favors and broker of access to God. From an early point in the developing reflection on Jesus' significance, that mediation was seen to have begun in the act of creation itself as the pre-incarnate Son was assigned the role of God's co-worker in creation,<sup>85</sup> indeed the "agent" through whom God fostered creation (John 1:3, 10; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:16; Heb 1:2-3).

Luke sums up the earthly ministry of Jesus as follows: "he went about doing good (*euergetōn*) and healing" (Acts 10:38). Luke has chosen a the verb form of the noun "benefactor" (*euergetēs*) to characterize Jesus' activity, which was "benefitting" others. Indeed, the second verb reveals the principal kind of benefaction bestowed by Jesus throughout his ministry, namely healing disease or infirmity and delivering from demonic oppression,<sup>86</sup> even the restoration of the dead to life (Mt 9:18-25; Lk 7:11-17). Jesus' ministry of teaching could also be considered a gift (and not something the crowds endured in order to receive gifts!), since good advice and guidance were valued and valuable commodities. Seneca (*Ben.* 1.2.4), for example, had included "advice" and "sound precepts" amidst the various kinds of assistance a friend or patron would give. Jesus' provision of simple meals for his vast entourage of five thousand and four thousand also resembles (with the important difference of the miraculous element; Mt 14:14-21; 15:32-38) the Roman *sportulae* (akin to our modern "boxed lunch") provided by patrons for the clients who attended them at their doorstep. This connection is especially apparent in John, where Jesus chides the crowds for following after him (joining his entourage) for the sake of a handout of food rather than for the spiritual food he has to offer (Jn 6:11, 15, 26-27, 34-35).

Jesus' ability to confer benefits of such kind derives from his relationship with God, specifically as the mediator of favors that reside in the province of God's power and prerogatives to grant or withhold. One episode that brings this to the fore poignantly is the healing of the paralytic who was let down through Peter's roof (Mk 2:3-12//Mt 9:2-8//Lk 5:20-26). Jesus' first act is to grant the man forgiveness of his sins, a bold move that prompts the religious experts sitting in the crowd to criticize him for presuming upon God's prerogatives (Mk 2:7), namely pardon for crimes committed against God. Jesus successfully defends his claim to be able to confer divine favors (like pardon), however, as he heals the paralytic and allows him to walk away. The visible



benefit proves the unobservable one, demonstrating that his declaring forgiveness is not blasphemy, but the real conferral of God's gift.<sup>87</sup>

The response to Jesus during his earthly ministry bears the stamp of responses typical of beneficiaries to their benefactors. Notable is the spread of Jesus' fame, the result of public testimony being given to the benefactor's generosity (Mk 5:19-20; Lk 8:39; Mk 4:24; 9:26, 31; Lk 5:15; 7:17). Even those who are commanded to be silent cannot refrain from spreading his fame, so ingrained is public praise of one's benefactor (Mk 1:45; 7:36-37; Lk 13:17; Mt 9:30-31).<sup>88</sup> It is possible that those healed understood Jesus' commands against publicizing it as signs of the genuineness of Jesus' motives in healing—he was not a “glory-seeker” but a sincere benefactor. Ironically, this would have the effect of making them feel gratitude even more deeply, and thus more apt to declare Jesus' *aretai*, his demonstrations of his virtue in well-doing. The result of this spread of the report of his well-doing is the collection of vast entourage (in essence, a *clientela*; Mt 4:25; Lk 5:15) who are clearly presented as seekers, or recipients, of his favors. The mass of followers is the visible representation of Jesus' fame and a potential power base for any public agenda he might entertain, hence the cause of the arousal of envy (Jn 12:19) and possibly the source of the fear that led to his execution by the Romans as a political enemy.

In addition to the increase of his reputation by his clients and those who approve his beneficent acts, Jesus personally receives the thanks and reverence due a patron. The story of the ten lepers (Lk 17:11-19) especially highlights the appropriateness of such expressions of gratitude at the reception of a benefit.<sup>89</sup> Jesus is approached by suppliants in an attitude of trust that he could provide access to divine favor and benefits (Mt 8:8-10; 9:18, 28). When one suppliant expresses an ounce of doubt about Jesus' ability in this regard, Jesus takes issue with him (Mk 9:22-24). When encountering the trust of the Syro-Phoenician woman, Jesus even alters his determination to channel God's favors to the people of Israel (the stated mission of his earthly ministry) since his generous character compels him to respond graciously to such trust (Mt 15:22-28). Some who had been benefitted by Jesus find ways to offer him a service in turn. For example, Peter's mother-in-law responds to Jesus' healing by taking the lead in offering hospitality (Lk 4:38-39), and the women who had been healed or exorcized now support financially the ministry of the One who benefitted them (Lk 8:1-3). Finally, Jesus' benefactions motivate praise of God, showing people's awareness of the ultimate source of these benefits, as of all “good gifts” (Lk 7:16; 17:15-18; 18:43; 19:37; Acts 4:21).<sup>90</sup>

The crowning benefaction conferred by Jesus is, of course, his voluntary death by means of which he grants deliverance from sin, death, and the power of Satan.<sup>91</sup> A prominent feature of passages speaking about this

deliverance is the great cost that Jesus incurred upon himself (e.g., “gave himself for us,” “died on our behalf,” and the like) to bring us these benefactions.<sup>92</sup> It often happened that a benefactor would put himself at risk and even incur great personal loss to bring benefits to others. Paul articulates the model as it would be practiced by the “best” or most generous of people (Rom 5:6-8; see also Jn 15:13), and indeed it was considered the height of generosity to give one’s life for the good of another (hence the extreme honor showed to those who died in battle to protect a city). Jesus, then, is primarily celebrated as one who spent his all bringing us good: “You know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich” (2 Cor 8:9),<sup>93</sup> “He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds” (Tit 2:14). This topic is widely utilized by New Testament authors to explain how a degrading execution was in reality a noble, beneficial death, and to stimulate our gratitude and sound the depths of the return we are to make by underscoring the costliness of Jesus’ act of favor. Most poignant in this regard is 2 Cor 5:15: “he died *for all*, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised *for them*.”

By means of his death, by which the memory of our sins is wiped away (in our conscience as well as the mind of God, Heb 9:9-14; 10:17), and now by means of his ongoing priesthood,<sup>94</sup> Jesus has opened up for his clients access to God the Father, the great Patron. He achieves for those who rely on him what neither angels, nor Moses, nor generations of Levitical priests had been able to provide,<sup>95</sup> namely direct access to God’s “throne of favor,” giving human beings the boldness to enter that holy space in the assurance of finding “mercy and favor for timely help” (Heb 4:14-16), having effectively removed all that stood in the way of God’s favor, namely sins (Heb 10:1-14). Many passages of the New Testament emphasize that Jesus is the sole grantor of access to the Father (see Mt 11:27; Jn 14:6; 1 Tim 2:5), placing him in the familiar role of “broker,” whose principal gift is connection with another patron (the whole work of reconciliation is an aspect of securing this relationship and prerequisite to conferring the access the Christian now enjoys).<sup>96</sup>

In the Gospels, Jesus makes his disciples mediators of divine favor as well, conferring on them the grant of authority to do the things he had been doing (healing, exorcizing, teaching). After his ascension, his benefaction continues through the work of his apostles, who publicly attest that Jesus’ “beneficence” (*euergesia*) stood behind the healing of the lame man in the Temple (Acts 4:9-10). The disciples appear at first to have understood their role as analogous to other middle-level brokers of access to a great person: they are the gate-keepers (note how they attempt to regulate the flow of access to Jesus

in Mk 10:13-14), and jealously guard that privilege (Mk 9:38-39). Jesus must teach them that, in the kingdom that God is building, being a mediator of the great Patron's favor is not to become the means to build up one's own power base or enhance the perception of one's importance as a channel of divine favor, monopolizing access to Jesus and God's favor (Lk 9:49-50). Instead, although they do go out as brokers of Jesus (Mt 10:40; Jn 13:20), they are not giving with a view to receiving honor or thanks or service from the recipients of the favors they mediate, but are to give as a response to having received themselves from God (Mt 10:1, 8). As if by way of extreme lesson, teaching those who enter into Christ's service that they do so not to enhance their own prestige and power through collecting clients, Jesus elevates those with whom no worldly-minded person would think it advantageous to "network," namely the weak, the little ones, as also his brokers and thus brokers of the One who sent Jesus (Mt 18:5; Mk 9:37; Lk 9:46-48). Not only does this remedy the wrong view of our brokering role as disciples, but it directs us ever against our cultural wisdom to network with the needy — the "unconnected!" — as the way to connect with Jesus.

Reception of "power from on high" after Jesus' ascension (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8), which continues to place the apostles in a mediatorial role, stands in parallel with the authority and offices sought for as "favors" by local elites or semi-elites from those above them in the political chain of command. Such a gift brought with it both the obligations of the office (which could be quite burdensome) and the power and prestige of the office (from which angle it was indeed a benefit). Paul views his own apostleship this way as well: it is a great honor (hence a great favor from God, as in Rom 1:5; "the grace that had been given to me," Gal 2:9) that has at the same time obligated him to serve people (Rom 1:14), to discharge an office zealously and at great expense to himself for the good of others. Being granted a privileged office, Paul becomes the mediator himself of divine favor, if only as the one who brings the announcement (the good news) about Jesus the One Mediator who reconciles us to God. He presents himself consistently as acting on behalf of the believers, bringing them spiritual blessing, and often incurring great costs and braving great dangers and pains to bring them these benefits.<sup>97</sup> The believers are thus obligated to Paul,<sup>98</sup> even as God obligated Paul to execute his office. They are not to despise his sufferings and his manual labor, since it is all "for them" (see especially 2 Cor 1:3-7; 4:7-15)

Jesus' favor is certainly not presented in terms of past generosity only. Hebrews, as we have noted, underscores his present mediatorial assistance in securing access to God for us, to which one may add his ongoing intercession on behalf of his own before the Father (Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25; 1 Jn 2:1). This is presented primarily in terms of the removal of sins and their potential damage



to the relationship of favor, but one suspects that the author of Hebrews has in mind Jesus' interest in securing for the believers all the divine assistance they need to arrive at the end of their journey. In their midst of their trials and temptations (not just wrestling with particular sins, but wrestling with finding the strength to continue to endure society's insults and abuse for their association with Jesus), Jesus "lays hold of" and "helps" the believers (Heb 2:16-18). Through his intimate acquaintance with their condition, he knows what specific assistance they will need from the "throne of favor."

This continued intercession and assistance itself points to the great gifts that are yet to come: we need Christ's assistance in overcoming those obstacles that threaten to despoil us of that prize. The New Testament authors point the believers consistently forward to the future benefaction, promised, awaited now in trust ("faith") and hope. Through Jesus, believers look forward to receiving the redemption of our bodies, which Paul equates with the realization of our adoption as sons and daughters (Rom 8:23), namely the transformation of our mortal body (Phil 3:20-21) into the resurrection body, the "tent not made with hands" (2 Cor 5:1-5; 1 Thess 4:14). This is the "promise of life" (2 Tim 1:1) that we await in hope (Tit 1:2). Having been made heirs (Tit 3:7; 1 Pet 3:7), believers do not yet "possess," so that believers still await reception of the promised inheritance (Eph 1:13-14; 1 Pet 1:4). Other images used to describe this future, impending grant from God are "deliverance" effected at Jesus' return (1 Thess 1:10; 5:9; Heb 9:28; 1 Pet 1:5, 9, 13), entrance into "rest" (Heb 4:1-11), or our heavenly city (Heb 11:16; 13:14), namely New Jerusalem (Rev 21:2-7), a share in Christ's honor (glory, 2 Thess 2:14; 1 Pet 5:10; Heb 2:10) and reign (Rev 5:10). When the Christian enjoys these benefactions, he or she has at last received the "hope" laid up for God's faithful clients in heaven (Col 1:5).

Mindful of the many benefits God has already conferred in Christ, and that Christ has secured for the Christians, the believers are left by the New Testament authors in a posture of hope and anticipation: "Set all your hope on the grace [*charin*, better rendered "gift" in this context] that Jesus Christ will bring when he is revealed" (1 Pet 1:13; NRSV). The history of God's generosity toward the Christian community gives strong assurance that these future gifts will not fail to be granted, hence bolsters "faith" or "trust."<sup>99</sup> The hope of this gift of unending life in God's realm becomes the "anchor of the soul" (Heb 6:19-20): as the addressees of these texts keep their hope and yearning for this gift strong, these authors know, the Christians' own firmness and reliability in their loyalty toward Jesus and their orientation toward their divine Patron will be similarly strong.

The tendency of New Testament authors to speak of Jesus as "Savior" is also in keeping with his role as benefactor, for the term was applied as an

honorary term to great and powerful figures who brought a city deliverance from an enemy, provided famine relief, and removed other threats to the well-being and stability of a group of people.<sup>100</sup> The believers have already experienced many aspects of his saving activity, namely deliverance ("salvation") from sin (Mt 1:21; Acts 5:31) or from the godlessness and slavery to the passions of the flesh that characterized our life prior to experiencing God's kindness (Tit 3:3-5). This Savior (or Deliverer) has conquered death and opened up the way to unending life (2 Tim 1:10); his beneficiaries, however, still await other aspects of this act of "deliverance" (Heb 1:14; 1 Pet 1:5, 9): deliverance from the wrath of God on the day of Judgment (Rom 5:9); the final deliverance from mortality that will come on that anticipated day when the Savior "that we are expecting" returns (Phil 3:20-21).

### **Making a Gracious Response**

"Since we are receiving an unshakable kingdom, let us show gratitude" (*echōmen charin*, Heb 12:28). One of the more important contributions an awareness of the ethos of "grace" in the first-century world can make is implanting in our minds the necessary connection between receiving and responding, between "favor" and "gratitude" in its fullest sense. Because we think about the "grace" of God through the lens of sixteenth-century Protestant polemics against "earning salvation by means of pious works," we have a difficult time hearing the New Testament's own affirmation of the simple, yet noble and beautiful, circle of grace. God has acted generously, and Jesus has granted great and wonderful gifts. These were not earned, but "grace" is never earned in the ancient world (this, again, is not something that sets New Testament "grace" apart from everyday "grace"). Once favor has been shown and gifts conferred, however, the result must invariably be that the recipient will show gratitude, will answer "grace" with "grace." The indicative and the imperative of the New Testament are held together by this circle of grace: we must respond generously and fully, for God has given generously and fully.<sup>101</sup>

How are Christians directed to respond to the beneficence of God in Christ? The first component of a fulsome response of gratitude is simply giving thanks to the Giver. "When we have decided that we ought to accept, let us accept cheerfully, professing our pleasure and letting the giver have proof of it in order that he may reap instant reward. Let us show how grateful we are for the blessing that has come by pouring forth our feelings" (Seneca, *Ben.* 2.22.1). Exuberant thanksgiving characterizes the worship of Israel (see Ps 92:1-4; 95:1-2; 103; 138; Sir 51:1-12), and was to mark the lives and gatherings of Christians as well (Eph 5:4, 19-20; Col 3:15, 17; 4:2; 1 Thess 5:18). Paul provides his churches with a remarkable model for thanksgiving, rendering praise to God for all progress in the churches (evidence to him of God's

nurturing and equipping: Rom 1:8; 1 Cor 1:4-7; Col 1:3-4; 1 Thess 3:9), for every deliverance from hardship or trouble (2 Cor 1:9-11), and for the work that God was accomplishing through him (2 Cor 2:14). Paul's example teaches us to be mindful ever of God's past gifts and watchful for the signs of God's continued assistance and gifting at work in our lives and in our churches, so that we can give God thanks as the firstfruits, as it were, of grateful hearts (Col 1:12; 2:7).

"Let us bear witness to them, not merely in the hearing of the giver, but everywhere" (Seneca, *Ben.* 2.22.1). Recipients of God's favor should therefore zealously seek the increase of God's honor or, better, the increase of the recognition of God's honor and generosity. The author of Ephesians shares the assumption of an Aristotle or a Seneca, namely that beneficence rightly results in the augmented renown and praise of the giver. So also God's generosity revealed in Jesus flows "unto the praise of the honor of his generosity (*charis*) with which he graced (*echaritōsen*) us in the Beloved" (Eph 1:6; see also 1:12, 14). It falls to the recipient of favor to testify to the favor and bring honor to the giver: the believers are now "to announce the virtuous deeds (*aretai*) of the One who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light" (1 Pet 2:10).<sup>102</sup> Showing gratitude to God in the first instance means proclamation of God's favors and publicly acknowledging one's debt to (and thus association with) Jesus, the mediator through whom we have access to God's favor (Lk 12:8-9).<sup>103</sup> A grateful heart is the source of evangelism and witness, which is perhaps most effectively done as we simply and honestly give God public praise for the gifts and help we have received from God. Perhaps some shrink from "evangelism" because they think they need to work the hearer through Romans, or discourse on the two natures of Christ. Begin by speaking openly, rather, about the favor God has shown you, the positive difference God's gifts have made in your life: tell other people facing great need about the One who supplies every need generously.

Words are not the only medium for increasing God's honor. Jesus directed his followers to pursue a life of "good works" which would lead those seeing them to "give honor to your Father who is in heaven" (Mt 5:16).<sup>104</sup> As believers persist in pursuing "noble deeds," those who now slander them will come to "glorify God" at the judgement (1 Pet 2:11-12). A particular "good work" and "noble deed" is benefaction: abundance in this ministry "overflows with many thanksgivings to God" (2 Cor 9:11-12). Living worthily of God's call, that is, walking in the life of virtue made possible through God's gift of the Spirit, also results in the increase of the honor given Jesus' name (2 Thess 1:11-12). By telling others of God's gifts, and by being zealous for virtue and well-doing, we have opportunity to advance our great Patron's reputation in this world, possibly leading others in this way to seek to attach themselves to so



good a benefactor.

Besides bringing honor to one's patron, it was also a vital part of gratitude to show loyalty to one's patron. Attachment to a patron could become costly,<sup>105</sup> should that patron have powerful enemies. Being grateful — owning one's association and remaining committed to that patron — could mean great loss (Seneca, *Ep.* 81.27). True gratitude entails, however, setting the relationship of "grace" above considerations of what is at the moment advantageous.<sup>106</sup> First-century Christians often faced, as so many international Christians in this century continue to face, choosing between loyalty to God and personal safety. For this reason, several texts underscore the positive results of enduring hostility and loss for their commitment. 1 Pet 1:6-9 interprets the believers' present experiences of testing as an opportunity for them to demonstrate the firmness of their commitment to their Divine Patron. Even though the mediator of their salvation, Jesus, is presently unseen, they love him and persist in trust toward him. The end result of keeping this trust firm is the preservation of their souls. Their joy in this interim is an outward witness to their confidence in their Patron to deliver what has been promised.

Suffering on account of association with the name of Jesus is considered a gift from God (Phil 1:29-30; 1 Pet 2:18-21).<sup>107</sup> Loyalty to God even in the face of suffering is a gift insofar as it brings one in line with Christ's example, so that "you may follow in his footsteps" (2 Pet 2:21). It is the ultimate destination of that path that makes suffering for the name of Christ a gift now, namely the deliverance and honor that God will give to those who commit themselves to him, trusting him (1 Pet 3:14; 4:13, 19; cf. Jesus' posture in 2:23). Given the cost Jesus was willing to incur in bringing us into God's favor, the believer should be emboldened to make a like return, leaving behind worldly comfort, honor, and safety for the sake of responding to Jesus (Heb 13:12-13). Loyalty to God means being careful to avoid courting God's enemies as potential patrons as well. In the first century, this meant not participating in rites that proclaimed one's indebtedness to the gods whose favor non-Christians were careful to cultivate (whether the Greco-Roman pantheon or the emperor: 1 Cor 10:14-21; Rev 14:6-13). If avoidance of such rituals meant losing the favor of one's human patrons, this was but the cost of loyalty to the Great Patron. One could not be more concerned with the preservation of one's economic and social well-being than living out a grateful response to the One God (Mt 6:24; Lk 12:8-9).

The other side of loyalty is trust (quite literally, since *pistis* referred to both). As seen already in 1 Pet 1:6-9, believers endured society's hostility not only out of gratitude for God's past gifts, but trusting firmly in the future benefactions of God, specifically the deliverance about to be revealed at the second coming (1:5, 13). At stake in Galatia, from Paul's perspective, was the

Christian community's trust in Jesus' ability to secure God's favor for them. If they were to seek to secure God's favor for themselves on the basis of works of Torah, this would now amount to a vote of "no confidence" in Jesus' mediation, to which they had previously committed themselves (and by means of which they had already received the Holy Spirit, 3:1-5). The result would be alienation from Jesus, who would no longer "benefit" those who distrusted, and ultimately from God's favor itself (Gal 2:20-21; 5:2-4). Firm trust in God becomes a source of "stability" for the believer, allowing him or her, in turn, to be a reliable client of God and friend of fellow-believers (Col 1:5). Jesus' own stability — the fact that he is the same person today as yesterday, and will still remain such tomorrow — provides the suitable platform for a stable trust (Heb 13:7-8).<sup>108</sup>

Clients would return gratitude in the form not only on honor and loyalty, but also in services performed for the patron. It is here that good works, acts of obedience, and the pursuit of virtue are held together inseparably with the reception of God's favor and kindnesses. A life of obedience to Jesus' teachings and the apostles' admonitions — in short, a life of good works — are not offered to gain favor from God, but nevertheless they *must* be offered in grateful response to God. To refuse these is to refuse the Patron who gave his all for us the return He specifically requests from us. Paul well understands how full our response should be: if Jesus gave his life for us, we fall short of a fair return unless we live our lives for him (2 Cor 5:14-15; Gal 2:20).

God's acts on our behalf become the strongest motivation for specific Christian behaviors. For example, Paul reminds the Corinthian church that, since they were ransomed for a great price, they are no longer their own masters: they owe it to their redeemer to use their bodies now as pleases him (1 Cor 6:12-20).<sup>109</sup> In more general terms, he reminds the Roman Christians that their experience of deliverance from sin and welcome into God's favor leaves them obliged now to use their bodies and lives to serve God, as once they served sin: they are "debtors," not to the flesh, but to the God who delivered them and will deliver them (8:12).<sup>110</sup> Such righteous conduct is always itself the result of God's enabling, God making us able even to offer a suitable response to his favor (Rom 8:2-4; Phil 1:11; Heb 13:20-21; 2 Pet 1:3-4). The fact that such resources are provided, however, makes it all the more incumbent upon the Christians to avail themselves of God's abundant supply and to make use of them rather than neglect them.

A prominent kind of exhortation in the New Testament promotes imitation of the virtues and generosity displayed by God and Jesus. First, Jesus enjoins the recipients of God's favor to imitate God's beneficence (see Mt 5:43-48; Lk 6:27-36). He challenges normal limits of reciprocity and generosity, setting rather as the standard God's example.<sup>111</sup> Christians are

directed to be benefactors to their non-Christian neighbors (1 Thess 3:12; 5:15), especially in the face of antagonism, so as to silence slander by "doing good" (1 Pet 2:15). The logic of these exhortations is consistently to respond in accordance with what benefactions one has received, whether "pardon" (or forgiveness, Mt 6:14-15; 18:23-35; Eph 4:32; Col 3:13), Jews and Gentiles extending welcome and acceptance within the church since they have each been welcomed freely by Christ (Rom 15:7), loving one another as Christ had shown love for us (Eph 5:2; 1 Jn 4:11), being more mindful of the interests of others than our own interests and recognition, as Christ gave example when he poured himself out for our benefit (Phil 2:1-11), laying down our lives to help one another, and this often in very practical and material demonstrations, because Jesus laid down his life to help us (1 Jn 3:16-18).

Another angle from which New Testament authors approach this response of service is calling Christians to be mindful of fulfilling God's purposes for us in giving us what he has and doing for us what he has done — that is to say, using God's gifts rightly and to their proper end.<sup>112</sup> God's patience toward the sinner is a gift meant to lead the sinner to repentance, "the riches of God's kindness" to bring about a change of heart (Rom 2:4). Failure to use this gift correctly shows that one "despises" God's kindness, and results in wrath. God's gift of freedom in Christ is neither to be set aside (Gal 5:1) nor used for purposes that do not honor or please God (Gal 5:13); rather, this freedom is an opportunity for love and service to fellow believers. Both Tit 2:11-14 and 2 Pet 1:4 focus on the transformation of our lives from lives marked by "the corruption that is in the world because of lust" or by "impiety and worldly passions" into "lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly," reflecting our participation "in the divine nature." Sanctification, in essence, is simply a right response to God's gifts, putting the resources God has made available for holiness in Christ to good and proper use.

Similarly, Paul and the author of 1 Peter speak frequently of the ways in which God has gifted individual believers for the good of the whole church. Divine endowments of this kind (whether teaching, prophetic utterance, wisdom, tongues, or even monetary contributions) become opportunities and obligations for service. The proper response to receiving such gifts is not boasting (1 Cor 4:7), which in effect suppresses the acknowledgment that these qualities stem from God's endowment, but sharing God's gifts with the whole church and the world. We are to exercise stewardship of the varied gifts that God has granted with the result that the honor and praise offered to God increases (1 Pet 4:10-11).<sup>113</sup>

Commitment to respond as grateful recipients is reinforced throughout the New Testament by the assurance that such a response keeps one centered in God's favor and leads to future benefactions from God. "You are my friends



if you do what I command you.... I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name" (Jn 15:14-16). Obedience leads to a "friendship" relationship with Jesus and access to and assurance of God's personal patronage (God's willingness to hear and answer believers' petitions; see also Jn 14:14-17). Jesus is the "source of eternal deliverance for those who obey him" (Heb 5:9), the author of Hebrews especially motivating perseverance in gratitude by keeping the addressees focused on "salvation" as something they are "about to inherit" (Heb 1:14) at Christ's second coming (Heb 9:28). Both 1 Pet 3:12 (quoting Ps 34:16) and 1 Jn 3:21-22 affirm that "obeying what God commands" brings assurance that God remains favorable to the Christians' petitions. In a passage that has been helpfully compared with the very form of the honorary decree commemorating benefactors,<sup>114</sup> the author of 2 Peter suggests that responding properly to God's ample provision for godliness meant the believers' "supplying alongside" God's provision our own zeal to bear the most fruit with the seed God plants within us (1:3-10). Such a lifestyle, demonstrating mindfulness of God's past benefactions of cleansing from sin and God's "precious and great promises" (meant to give us the impetus to rise above worldly corruption), leads to the final benefit: "entrance into the eternal kingdom" will "be abundantly supplied to you" (1:11).<sup>115</sup>

### **Ungraceful Responses to God's Beneficence**

The Christian Scriptures also present the danger of failing to attain God's gift (Heb 12:15), of "receiving God's gift in vain" (2 Cor 6:1). Just as living out a response of gratitude assures the believer of God's favor in the future, so responding to God's favor with neglect, ingratitude, or even contempt threatens to make one "fall from favor" (Gal 5:4) resulting in the danger of exclusion from future benefactions. When attempting to dissuade their audiences from a particular course of action, the New Testament authors will show the hearers how such a course of action is inconsistent with the obligations of gratitude, and how such a course threatens to turn the affronted Patron's favor into wrath.

In effect, refusal or neglect of the sorts of acts described above as constituting a response demonstrating gratitude would mean that the recipient of priceless favors broke the circle of grace and brought the dance to a strident halt. Disowning Jesus (Mt 10:32-33), failing to honor God or return reverence (Rom 1:21; Rev 9:20-21; 16:9, 11), failing to use God's gifts for their intended purposes (Jude 4; Rom 2:4-5), showing distrust toward God or Jesus, faltering rather than acting on their promises (Gal 1:6; 2:21; 5:2-4; Jas 1:6-7; Heb 3:12, 19), showing disloyalty by making alliances with God's enemies (Jas 4:4; Rev 14:9-11), and responding to the divine patron's call for service with

disobedience (Heb 3:18-19), such as brings God's name into dishonor (Rom 2:17-24), are all ugly and unsuitable courses of action in light of the generosity and favor God has lavished upon the Christians. Such actions show gross forgetfulness of these benefits,<sup>116</sup> and provoke God by meeting his favor and kindness with insult and abuse.

The sermon "to the Hebrews" provides strong examples of these topics at work.<sup>117</sup> Here was a congregation that had faced a time of painful hostility, reproach, abuse, and marginalization (10:32-34), some members of which were finding their association with the Christian group less valuable than returning to the good favor of society (10:25). The author strongly urges the believers to resist any pull that leads them to "drift away" from a straight course toward the good goal that God has set for them. They must "press forward to perfection" (6:1), since

it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, since on their own they are crucifying again the Son of God and are holding him up to contempt. Ground that drinks up the rain falling on it repeatedly, and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. But if it produces thorns and thistles, it is worthless and on the verge of being cursed; its end is to be burned over (6:4-8; NRSV).

The audience is described as having received several important gifts from God ("enlightenment," the Holy Spirit, the unspecified "heavenly gift") as well as foretastes of the benefactions yet to come. How, then, could they think of falling away? Such an act would display contempt for the gifts and the Giver, bringing public disgrace on Jesus rather than enhancing his honor as they testify to their neighbors: "you were right; Jesus' favor is not worth the cost of remaining associated with his name." The agricultural illustration that closes the paragraph teaches that God's gifts (here, rain) look for a return, a "suitable crop"; if the land bears instead what is unpleasant and unprofitable, it has only the fire to look forward to.<sup>118</sup> The author asserts that God has carefully cultivated the believers through abundance of gifts to be "fruitful soil" for him, to bear "suitable vegetation for those on whose behalf [they] were cultivated," namely acts of love and service for their fellow-believers (6:9-10), remaining reliable and faithful supports to one another in the face of society's shaming techniques. How could they, then, think of bearing the prickly thorns of defection, or shirking their responsibilities to help one another and support one

another through their common pilgrimage?<sup>119</sup>

This passage has stood at the center of the theological controversy of eternal security as opposed to the possibility of believers committing an unpardonable sin. The author of Hebrews, however, moves in a social ethos in which recipients of benefactions are led to act with one set of considerations in view (namely, the importance of maintaining a response of gratitude and avoiding any course which would show ingratitude toward a patron) while benefactors are led to act with another set of considerations in view (with an emphasis on exercising generosity and magnanimity). Most poignant in this regard is Seneca's advice to the patron who has met with ingratitude not to be afraid to give a second gift, in the hope that, as the farmer works the unproductive soil, this new gift will awaken gratitude and loyalty in all their fullness (*Ben.* 7.32). The doctrine of eternal security threatens to distract us, who are clearly in the role of clients, from focusing on what is our proper business, namely maintaining our commitment to return grace for grace; attempts to set limits on God's generosity, on the other hand, also impinge on what is not properly ours, namely God's freedom to give even to one who has proven ungrateful in the extreme. The scriptural witness creates the same sort of tension discovered in Greco-Roman texts on patronage — warning clients about the grave perils of ingratitude and the exclusion from favor it brings, but also extolling the patron whose generosity is greater than the ingratitude of some recipients. It is a healthy tension, and choosing one side to the exclusion of the other would be a misstep in the dance of grace.

### Christian Giving

It seems appropriate to give some space in this chapter to the topic of Christian giving, and to the New Testament interpretation of acts of benefaction and patronage within the new community. Jesus had much to say about beneficence toward the poor. Charity leads to lasting (eternal) wealth (Lk 2:33; 14:12-14; 16:9; 18:22), with the result that Jesus urges all his hearers to "sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven" (Lk 12:33).<sup>120</sup> The concept that one's true possessions are what one gives away was known to Seneca,<sup>121</sup> although Seneca would have advised a more "judicious" (from a worldly point of view) deployment of benefits than Jesus, who tells us to seek out those who have no means of repayment, so that God will repay us "at the resurrection of the righteous" (Lk 14:12-14). The striking vision of Mt 25:31-46, in which the righteous are separated from the wicked on the basis of beneficence toward the needy, surprises the hearers and readers by asserting that providing food and clothing and comfort to the needy is the way to "return the favor" to the One who has given us all we need for our well-being and survival (gifts of food and



clothing, for example: Mt 6:11, 25-33). We have the opportunity to make a gracious return to our Lord and benefactor in the person of the poor or the oppressed.

Especially in the letters of Paul one finds a remarkable transformation of the cultural code of patronage. Monetary contributions and other forms of assistance or beneficence within the local church or between cells of the Church universal remains a source of recognition and honor. Paul honors the Macedonian Christians for their generosity by praising them to the Corinthian congregations (2 Cor 8:1-5; 11:9), amplifying their virtue by stressing that they did not let their own poverty hinder their generosity.<sup>122</sup> Paul includes in his letters remembrances of individuals who have undergone expense or exercised beneficence for his good or the good of the church. He announces that he is himself, together with "all the churches of the Gentiles," indebted to Prisca and Aquila, who "risked their necks for [Paul's] life," thus who displayed the greatest generosity (Rom 16:3-4). Paul calls for public honors to be given Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus for their service ("so give recognition to such persons," 1 Cor 16:17-18). He makes special mention of the service of Epaphroditus, a person who, acting as the agent or vehicle of the Philippian church's support of Paul, spends himself to the uttermost (he endures illness even almost to death). Such a person, Paul declares, merits honor in the community (Phil 2:29-30). Since the letters are public documents, read before the gathered assembly of believers, such mention amounts to a public announcement of the individual's generosity and brings him or her honor in the congregation.

Nevertheless, benefaction within the church is a specific gift of God: it is a manifestation of God's patronage of the community, mediated through its members (Rom 12:6-8; Eph 4:7, 11-12).<sup>123</sup> Alongside and among spiritual endowments and edifying services like prophecy, tongues, teaching and words of knowledge, God also bestows the gift of giving to achieve God's purposes in the family of God. God supplies all things, so that Christians are called to share on the basis of their kinship responsibilities toward one another in the church rather than use gifts of money and hospitality to build up their client base (the source of local prestige and power).<sup>124</sup> This is a bold transformation of patronage into stewardship.

Patronage and benefaction are therefore removed from the realm of competition among humans for honor and accumulation of power — a message as relevant today as ever. Indeed, participating in relief efforts is presented as much as a favor granted the givers as a favor done by the givers. The collection for the poor in the Judean churches is perhaps the most prominent act of beneficence among the churches in the New Testament (Acts 11:29; Rom 15:26-27; 2 Cor 8-9). Paul views this, however, not as an act of human

patronage, but as God's beneficence working itself out through responsive Christians (2 Cor 9:8-15; God "supplies" (*epichorēgeō*) the resources which meet the needs of the Corinthians fully and give them "abundance for every good deed"), so that ultimately God rightly receives the thanks for the donation (2 Cor 9:11-12). Participation in the relief effort is a "favor" for which the Macedonian Christians earnestly "begged" Paul (2 Cor 8:4). The Judean Christians reciprocate with prayer on behalf of the Gentile Christians (2 Cor 9:14).<sup>125</sup> An important motive for giving is supplied by Paul in his interjection of Christ's generous example, who "though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor" (2 Cor 8:9). Participating in the relief effort is a means of honoring the divine benefactor (9:13) by imitating his generosity: his example should spur them on in this endeavor. Moreover, since the Corinthians have been enriched by Christ (8:9) and by God (9:10-11) in so many ways, they are honor-bound to use the riches entrusted to them for God's purposes, namely relieving the needs of the saints.

Much tension within contemporary churches could be relieved if we took to heart Paul's "paradigm shift" for patronage. Those who contribute to the local church do not lay the minister or the congregation under obligation, but are enacting faithfully their service to God (and ought to be honored on that basis). They give not in order to secure a return (usually in the form of power and influence within the local church), but because God has given.

### Conclusion

Growing in our understanding of the social contexts of "grace" contributes to our reading of the New Testament in several ways. We become more attuned to the gifts God has granted to those who approach him through his Son, and are reminded of the favors God has promised for the future. It keeps our focus returning to these, so that God's benefits remain always on our minds (rather than neglected or forgotten as we go about our daily lives). Paul prays in the opening of Ephesians that Christians be made mindful of the magnificence of God's generosity (Eph 1:3, 7-11, 17-19). Indeed we should return frequently to meditate upon the immensity of God's favor both in terms of his general benefactions (life, salvation, a future of hope) as well as in terms of his personal patronage, the ways in which his favor has entered into our own lives at our points of need. Our awareness of God's generosity and our indebtedness to God will in this way become the focal points for our understanding of our lives, with the result that the cares of the world, as well as its promises, are less like to distract and entangle us.

The fundamental ethos governing relationships of patrons and the clients, benefactors and beneficiaries, and friends is that grace must answer grace: the receiving of favor must lead to the return of gratitude, or else the

beauty and nobility of the relationship is defaced (dis-graced). As we grow in our appreciation of God's beneficence, we are thereby impelled to energize our commitment to make an appropriate response of gratitude to God. When the magnitude of God's generosity is considered, gratitude and its fruits must of necessity fill our speech, attitudes, and actions.

The New Testament authors outline what a just and suitable response would entail, guiding us to act as honorable recipients of favor and averting us from making an ugly response of ingratitude, neglect, or disloyalty, which would also lead to the danger of exclusion from future favors yet to be conferred. We come to engage evangelism more naturally (but also necessarily) not now as a contest for winning souls, but as an opportunity to spread the fame of God and testify to the good things God has done in our behalf. The obligations of gratitude demand that we not hold our tongue in this regard! We begin to understand that obedience to God -- throwing ourselves and our resources into the work of caring for the global church -- is not something we might do "over and above" the demands of everyday life. Rather, these pursuits are placed at the center of each day's agenda. As God did not bestow on us what was merely left over after he satisfied himself, so we are called upon to make a like exchange by giving our all and our best to God's service first. Moreover, we discover that loyalty to such a patron must be preserved without wavering. This can embolden us in our struggles with our own sins, as we consider how indulging them enacts disloyalty toward the One we should only please. It can also embolden our confrontations with an unbelieving world that finds whole-hearted loyalty to this God and his ways a threat and reproach to its way of life. Gratitude provides a clarifying focus to the Christian for his or her life, a single value that, lived out as the New Testament authors direct, will result in a vibrant, fruitful discipleship.

Finally, as we read the pages of the New Testament with an eye to promises of favor, we become more highly sensitized to the way these authors seek to instill in us such a hope for, and trust in, God's promised benefactions that we will have firmness and fixedness in the midst of this life's chances and changes. Such an undivided hope provides an anchor for the soul and the means for stability and reliability in our Christian commitment. As our ambitions are all channelled toward the good gifts that God has prepared for us, we, like the early Christians, will find it easier to detach ourselves from the trivial pursuits and rewards promoted by the society around us and remain constant in our orientation toward the Divine Patron.

#### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> See Halvor Moxnes, "Patron-Client Relations and the New Community in Luke-Acts," in *The Social World of Luke-Acts*, ed. J. H. Neyrey (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991),



241-268, pp. 242-244.

<sup>2</sup> Rightly, J. H. Elliott, "Patronage and Clientism in Early Christian Society," *Forum* 3 (1987): 39-48, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> Bonds of reciprocity (whether between social equals, called friends, or between patrons and their clients) could continue across the generations. A child inherits, as it were, his or her parents' networks of friends and enemies. Ben Sira bears witness: "he has left behind him an avenger against his enemies, and one to repay the kindness of his friends" (30:6), as does Isocrates: "it is fitting that a son should inherit his father's friendships even as he inherits his estate" (*To Demonicus* 2; LCL). See also Seneca, *Ben.* 2.18.5: "I must be far more careful in selecting my creditor for a benefit than my creditor for a loan. For to the latter I shall have to return the same amount that I have received, and, when I have returned it, I have paid all my debt and am free; but to the other I must make an additional payment, and, even after I have paid my debt of gratitude, the bond between us still holds; for, just when I have finished paying it, I am obliged to begin again, and friendship endures; and, as I would not admit an unworthy man to my friendship, so neither would I admit one who is unworthy to the most sacred privilege of benefits, from which friendship springs" (LCL).

<sup>4</sup> J. Boissevain, *Friends of Friends: Networks, Manipulators and Coalitions* (New York: St. Martin's, 1974), 148.

<sup>5</sup> A fuller analysis of these can be found in G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, "Suffragium: From Vote to Patronage," *British Journal of Sociology* 5 (1954) 33-48.

<sup>6</sup> See also Saller, *Patronage*, p. 75, n.194: "That the mediators would have received the credit and gratitude from the ultimate recipient of the favor is clear from the last sentence of Pliny, *Ep.* 3.8, where Pliny secures a tribunate for Suetonius who passes it on to a relative, with the result that the relative is indebted to Suetonius who is in turn indebted to Pliny."

<sup>7</sup> *Ad familiares* 13, cited in Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, "Patronage in Roman Society: from Republic to Empire," in Wallace-Hadrill, *Patronage in the Ancient World*, 63-89, p. 77.

<sup>8</sup> See R. P. Saller (*Personal Patronage under the Early Empire* [Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1982], 8-11). Cicero (*De officiis* 1.56) provides this testimony: "Another strong bond of fellowship is effected by mutual interchange of kind services; and as long as these kindnesses are mutual and acceptable, those between whom they are interchanged are united by ties of enduring intimacy" (LCL).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8-11; see also C. Osiek and D. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World* (Louisville, KY: WJKP, 1997), p. 49.

<sup>10</sup> J. Pitt-Rivers, "Postscript: the place of grace in anthropology," in J. G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, *Honor and Grace in Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 215-246.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 233.

<sup>12</sup> See especially lines 342-51; 401-404. These are ably discussed in Millett, "Patronage and its avoidance," pp. 19-20.

<sup>13</sup> Pitt-Rivers, "Postscript," 233.

<sup>14</sup> Josephus, *BJ* 1.21.11-12.

<sup>15</sup> C. Osiek and D. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World* (Louisville, KY: WJKP, 1997), p. 50.

<sup>16</sup> In Seneca's words, "there is a great difference between not excluding a man and choosing him" (*Ben.* 4.28.5). Personal patronage involves a choice and a commitment to an ongoing relationship with a client.

<sup>17</sup> See Seneca, *De beneficiis* 6.19.2-5.

<sup>18</sup> See R. P. Saller, "Patronage and friendship in early imperial Rome: drawing the distinction," in Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (ed.), *Patronage in Ancient Society* (London: Routledge, 1989), 49-62, pp. 54-55; especially important is the collection of 51 inscriptions analyzed in F. W. Danker, *Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field* (St. Louis, MO: Clayton Publishing House, 1982).

<sup>19</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists* 6.253e-f; quoted in Danker, *Benefactor*, 202-203.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman imperial cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 1.

<sup>21</sup> See Paul Millett, "Patronage and its avoidance in classical Athens," in Wallace-Hadrill (ed.), *Patronage in Ancient Society*, 15-48.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 23-25.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>24</sup> Saller, "Patronage and Friendship," 57-58.

<sup>25</sup> See the discussion also in *TDNT* IX:373-376.

<sup>26</sup> It is in its meaning as "gift" that "grace" also referred to the qualities of "poise," "charm," or "beauty" and that the adjective "graceful" was, and is, applied to "charming, beautiful, skilled" people. In these cases "graceful" means "graced" or "gifted," that is, "having received positive endowments from God or nature."

<sup>27</sup> See the frequent occurrence of the plural "graces" ("gifts," *charitas*) in the inscriptions collected in Danker, *Benefactor* (as well as the discussion on p. 328); *TDNT* IX:375 also cites the customary formula: "on account of the gifts, the χάριτας, of so-and-so we proclaim these honors." The Latin term *beneficium* is defined by Seneca as the equivalent of these first two meanings of *charis* (*Ben.* 2.34.5). The Latin word *gratia*, moreover, shares the three meanings wedded within the Greek *charis*.

<sup>28</sup> See, further, *TDNT* IX:376: "in relation to the recipient of grace χάρις means 'thanks' to the benefactor." The following passages also use the expression "have grace" in the sense of "show thanks": Luke 17:9; Heb 12:28; on "grace" as "thanks," see the expression "thanks be to God" in Rom 6:17; 7:25; 2 Cor 8:16; 9:15.

<sup>29</sup> Hence the saying of Sophocles (*Ajax* 522): "favor (*charis*) is always giving birth to favor (*charin*).

<sup>30</sup> Seneca (*Ben.* 6.13.1-2) allows the giving of a benefaction to be profitable both to the giver and the recipient, stressing that the recipient is not released from showing gratitude: "I am not so unjust as to feel under no obligation to a man who, when he was profitable to me, was also profitable to himself....nay, I am also desirous that a benefit given to me should even be more advantageous to the giver, provided that, when he gave it, he was considering us both, and meant to divide it between himself and me.... I am, not merely unjust, I am grateful, if I do not rejoice that, while he has benefitted me, he has also benefitted himself" (LCL).

<sup>31</sup> Throughout his book, Seneca stresses that benefactors and friends give "for the sake of giving" and not for the sake of any return (*Ben.* 1.2.3; 4.29.3).

<sup>32</sup> Pitt-Rivers ("Postscript," 217-218) points out that the typical responses to thanks in

English, French, Italian, and German-speaking countries involve some equivalent of “it was nothing” or “it was a pleasure,” sayings which, in denying that obligation has been incurred, stresses the purity of the motive of the giver (without nullifying any obligation — in fact, only making that obligation felt more strongly by the recipient of favor since the motives are seen to have been pure). It is astounding that the moral ideal of giving “purely” for the sake of the recipient has persisted intact across the millennia.

<sup>33</sup> Ben Sira advises: “If you do a kindness, know to whom you do it, and you will be thanked for your good deeds” (Sir 12:1), advice that was remembered in the early church (see *Didache* 1.5-6) as a good rule for giving alms (an important form of benefaction, which, though personal, did not initiate the ongoing relationship of patron and client). Cicero (*De officiis* 1.45) affirms that “our love [a common way to refer to beneficence] must be shown to the worthy,” urging his reader to consider the potential recipient’s “character, his regard for us, his closeness to us, his usefulness to us in former services” when weighing the decision to give or not to give. The need to select beneficiaries and clients with great care is a frequent theme in Seneca (*Ben.* 1.1.2; 3.11.1; 3.14.1; 4.8.2).

<sup>34</sup> Thus Isocrates (*Ad Demonicam* 24): “Make no man your friend before inquiring how he has used his former friends; for you must expect him to treat you as he has treated them” (LCL).

<sup>35</sup> See Seneca, *Ben.* 1.10.5.

<sup>36</sup> See Seneca, *Ben.* 2.35.3-4; 5.11.5; 1.4.3 (which uses the expression “debt of gratitude”). Aristotle (*Nic. Eth.* 1163b12-15) also speaks of the necessity of “repaying” a gift, even though the kind of gifts may be vastly different (e.g., a “friend” of lesser means returns intangible goods like honor and fame for material goods received from a “friend” of greater means, i.e., a patron).

<sup>37</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* 1.48; Seneca, *Ben.* 1.4.3; see also Isocrates, *Ad Demonicam* 26: “Consider it equally disgraceful to be outdone by your enemies in doing injury and to be surpassed by your friends in going kindness (*tais euergesiais*)” (LCL). See also Pseudo-Phocylides (*Sentences*, 80): “It is proper to surpass benefactors with still more.”

<sup>38</sup> Thus Dio Chrysostom, *Oration* 31.7. Ben Sira goes so far as to suggest that the requital of favors “counts” as an offering to God: “He who returns a kindness (*antapodidous charin*) offers fine flour” (Sir 35:2).

<sup>39</sup> Seneca (*Ben.* 1.4.4) and Dio (*Or.* 31.37) both call ingratitude an assault on the honor of the three Graces, and thus a wicked act of sacrilege.

<sup>40</sup> See also Cicero, *De officiis* 2.63.

<sup>41</sup> Quote from Anaximenes (frequently attributed to Aristotle), *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* 1421b3-1422a2. Seneca appeals to unanimity of human opinion in this regard: “What is so praiseworthy, upon what are all our minds so uniformly agreed, as the repayment of good services with gratitude?” (*Ben.* 4.16.3); “Not to return gratitude for benefits is a disgrace, and the whole world counts it as such” (*Ben.* 3.1.1).

<sup>42</sup> Seneca, *Ben.* 3.6.2; 3.17.1-12.

<sup>43</sup> On the shamefulness of forgetting benefactions, see Cicero, *De officiis* 2.63; Seneca, *Ben.* 3.1.3; 3.2.1; on the even greater dangers of insulting one’s benefactors, see Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 2.2.8 and Dio, *Oration* 31. Such courses of action do not only destroy a patron’s benevolent disposition toward one, they can turn benevolence into virulent anger and the desire for revenge (see also Pitt-Rivers, “Postscript,” 236).

<sup>44</sup> See, again, Seneca, *Ben.* 1.10.5; Isocrates, *Ad Demonicam* 24, 29. Wallace-Hadrill



("Patronage," 72-73) suggests, astutely in light of the perception of limited goods that marked the ancient world, that a patron's power came not from being able to give whatever was needed to whomever asked, but from the impossibility of bestowing favors on all who needed them: the finitude of beneficence made jockeying for limited resources all the more intense and enhanced the willingness of clients or would-be clients to vie with one another to attain the patron's favor through services, honors, and the like: "their success in control lay as much in their power to refuse as in their readiness to deliver the goods." This certainly plays out in the scene of provinces and cities vying for a special place in the emperor's eye, so that scarce resources would be diverted one way and not another. At this point an important distinction between human patronage and God's patronage emerges, for the latter is proclaimed as the giver of boundless benefits to whomever asks (Lk 11:9-13; Jas 1:5).

<sup>45</sup> Five out of 51 inscriptions collected and translated by Danker contain these expressions or their near equivalents. See Danker, *Benefactor*, 57, 77-79, 89-91, 152-53; 283-85. Cicero (*De officiis* 2.70) also attests that showing gratitude to present patrons attracts the positive attention of potential future patrons as well.

<sup>46</sup> Dio (*Or.* 31.7) bears witness to the truth of these dynamics: "For those who take seriously their obligations toward their benefactors and mete out just treatment to those who have loved them, all men regard as worthy of favour (*charitos axios*), and without exception each would wish to benefit them to the best of his ability."

<sup>47</sup> Seneca, *Ben.* 3.7.2

<sup>48</sup> Seneca, *Ben.* 6.41.1-2. Once again, Pitt-Rivers' observations of reciprocity in the modern Mediterranean (rural) context resonates deeply with its ancient counterpart: "A gift is not a gift unless it is a free gift, i.e., involving no obligation on the part of the receiver, and yet...it nevertheless requires to be returned" ("Postscript," 233); "You cannot pay for a favor in any way or it ceases to be one, you can only thank, though on a later occasion you can demonstrate gratitude by making an equally 'free' gift in return" ("Postscript," 231).

<sup>49</sup> See Dio, *Or.* 31.17, 20; 51.9. The first half of Danker, *Benefactor*, consists of translations and analyses of such honorary inscriptions. In *Oration* 66, Dio lampoons the "glory seeker" who spends all his or her fortune on public benefactions just to receive crowns, special seating, and public proclamations — "lures for the simpletons."

<sup>50</sup> Aristotle regards human patronage and the favor of the gods to be of one kind, different merely in terms of degree, with the result that, in the case of the gods, one cannot ever repay their favors and a person "is deemed virtuous if he pays them all the regard he can" (*Nic. Eth.* 1163b12-18).

<sup>51</sup> "Patronage," 82.

<sup>52</sup> Thus Seneca, *Ben.* 4.20.2; 4.24.2.

<sup>53</sup> This is the sense of "faith" (*pistis*) in *4 Maccabees* 13:13; 16:18-22. Seven Jewish brothers have the choice laid before them by the tyrant Antiochus IV: transgress Torah and assimilate wholly to the Greek way of life, or die miserably. The brothers choose to brave the tortures, keeping "faith" with the God who gave the brothers the gift of life.

<sup>54</sup> See, again, *4 Maccabees* 8:5-7, where King Antiochus urges the young Jewish brothers to "trust," or "have faith in," him for their future well-being and advancement, abandoning their current alliances and associations in favor of a new attachment to him.

<sup>55</sup> See Saller, "Patronage," 53-56.

<sup>56</sup> During this period we have clear evidence of the intentional and aggressive Hellenizing of Jerusalem and Judea, led by priestly and other aristocratic Jewish families. See 1 Maccabees 1 and 2 Maccabees 3-4.

<sup>57</sup> Especially during the period of Roman rule we find Judean monarchs like Herod the Great continuing a strong Hellenizing and Romanizing program both in Jerusalem and in the creation of new cities in Galilee and coastlands. See Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), the groundbreaking study of how fully Hellenized Judea and Jerusalem were by the time of Christ. The mindset that somehow Palestine maintained an "Old Testament" or "Hebrew" culture while the rest of the world went on its Hellenized way persists even in the work of otherwise excellent scholars (see Randall Gleason, "The Old Testament Background of the Warning in Hebrews 6:4-8," *Bib Sac* 155 [1998] 62-91, especially p. 63 and n.4), but looking to "Jewish" backgrounds (themselves quite Hellenized, if one considers intertestamental literature) to the exclusion of, or in preference to, "Greco-Roman" backgrounds is not consistent with what we know about the Hellenization of Palestine and the Jews' creative use of Hellenistic thought and culture as they re-formulated their own culture and religion during the centuries before Christ.

<sup>58</sup> Danker (*Benefactor*, 28-29) draws a correct and perceptive conclusion: "It is not probable that Greek or Roman bakers and shoemakers bothered to read the words of every dedicatory stele. Yet there would be far more acquaintance on the part of the general public with the themes and formulations of these documents than with the works of literary figures. People who had never heard of Herodotos or Sophokles would certainly have opened their eyes or ears when a Caesar proclaimed relief from oppressive legislation"; "To do hermeneutical justice, then, to public documents like those in the Pauline corpus — including even the Letter to Philemon — it is necessary to interpret them first of all in the light of linguistic data that would have been available to the larger public and which would have provided the necessary semantic field for understanding the argument of a versatile communicator like Paul."

<sup>59</sup> E.g., wherever reception of gifts or promises from God is used as the motivation for some act or behavior (the frequent use of "therefore" to connect exhortation to a prior discourse on God's "grace" or favors and kindnesses is far from accidental or cosmetic).

<sup>60</sup> See also the treatment of this passage in Moxnes, "Patron-Client Relations," 252-253.

<sup>61</sup> This may be a bold move on Paul's part, for his claim to being Philemon's patron is far less visible (in terms of "actual," visible favors) than Philemon's claim on the church and, quite likely, on Paul.

<sup>62</sup> Onesimus, who was now lodged with Paul, might not legally have been considered a runaway slave. Slaves who were experiencing difficulty in their masters' homes were known to leave the master in search of one of the master's "friends," who could plead the slave's case, acting as a broker between slave and master, in the hope of the slave's returning to a more endurable situation. Such a slave remained, in effect, within the master's household by fleeing to a friend of the master -- making him disobedient, perhaps, but not a runaway.

<sup>63</sup> This is strikingly similar to the case of Voconius Romanus in Pliny's letter to the emperor Trajan, discussed above.

<sup>64</sup> Just considering Luke-Acts, we have the following examples. Acts 10:2, 22 presents

a second centurion, one who “gave alms generously,” that is, committed himself to public benefaction, particularly of the poor (providing sustenance rather than entertainments or buildings — but still a form of public benefaction), with the result that he was “well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation,” the recipients and observers of his beneficence. The opening of the speech of Tertullus before Felix (Acts 24:2-4) is filled with the customary praises of a beneficent ruler who has maintained peace through his foresight, a profession of gratitude before a new request for a favor is made. Acts 24:27 and 25:9 show again how manipulation of the judicial process could be construed as a “favor” done to benefit someone or some group (recall Cicero’s and Marcus Aurelius’ attempts to secure favorable verdicts for their friends and clients). In the parable of the prudent steward (Lk 16:4-9), the soon-to-be-unemployed steward provides relief from substantial amounts of debt to the master’s debtors as a benefaction, anticipating (indeed, counting on) the recipients to show their gratitude when he will need aid in the near future. In the middle of Luke’s passion narrative, we find a new “friendship” relationship being formed (replacing former mistrust and rivalry) as Pilate and Herod exchange mutual courtesies (Lk 23:6-12), honoring one another by giving the other the right to decide a case. Finally, we would mention the prologues to Luke and Acts (Lk 1:1-4; Acts 1:1-2) as quite probably the literary dedication of a work to the patron whose support had made the leisure for research and writing possible (which would be in keeping with the many other dedications beginning works of literature in Greek or Latin).

<sup>65</sup> There is a peculiar tendency in scholarship (particularly among those claiming the title “evangelical”) to drive wedges between the New Testament texts or early Christianity and the Greco-Roman culture within which it grew up and formulated its conception of the work of God and human response (within which, for that matter, Judaism continued to take shape both in Palestine and, let us not forget, in the Diaspora). This is evident, for example, when scholars insist without defense that Old Testament backgrounds are “closer” to the New Testament and on that basis exclude other backgrounds (as in Gleason, “Old Testament Background,” p. 63), or when scholars affirm differences without allowing themselves to acknowledge or “see” similarities (a recurring problem in D. N. Howell, Jr., “Review of *Despising Shame: Honor Discourse and Community Maintenance in the Epistle to the Hebrews*,” *JETS* 42 [1999]161-63). This ideological trend has been helpfully demonstrated and criticized in Vernon Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 232-235. The result is a skewed presentation of the sources that informed and were transformed within early Christian culture. Paul, for example, appears to have used whatever material would help convey the significance of Jesus Christ and shape and motivate a faithful response within a community of disciples, whether that material was drawn from the Jewish Scriptures, Greek poets, or philosophical ethicists. Holding the text up against a variety of background, rather than choosing one to the exclusion of all others, will result in a more richly-nuanced understanding of how the text was heard by its (largely) Greco-Roman audience and how it sought to persuade them. Do we believe that Christianity is “more legitimate” if its ideas can be traced back to Jewish (or, more specifically, Hebrew) sources than if we find Greek or Roman ideas informing Paul or Luke?

<sup>66</sup> In this regard, the fact that Greek and Latin authors classify people’s obligations to



God (or, in some authors, the “gods”) under the rubric of returning just thanks and honor is significant. Long before the birth of Christianity, the ancients knew the divine to be the supreme benefactor of humanity, and thus upheld the virtue of piety as an essential obligation (see Aristotle, *Nic. Eth.* 1163b16-18).

<sup>67</sup> Aristotle, for example, noted among the things that rouse anger and desire for vengeance insulting or mistreating a benefactor (*Rhetoric* 2.2.8).

<sup>68</sup> Mary’s song also highlights God’s interest in benefitting and protecting the poor and humble, often to the exclusion of the rich and powerful (Lk 1:48, 51-53; see also Jas 2:5); Jesus also presents himself as the agent of God’s beneficence toward the poor and marginal (Luke 4:18-19), and Paul interprets the Corinthians’ reception of favor along similar lines (1 Cor 1:26-31). In this way, God subverts the “food chain” in normal patron-client relationships, taking on as his clients not those closer up in rank and status (hence possessing greater potential for returning favors) but reaching down to those who lack rank and status. Humility rather than upward-climbing is the way to get close to this patron, to “find favor” from God (see Sir 3:18; Jas 4:10; 1 Pet 5:5-6).

<sup>69</sup> See also Lk 4:25-30, in which Jesus reminds the hearers of God’s previous benefactions bestowed specifically on Gentiles — and that at times when there were many Jews in need of such a favor, but received none. Eph 1:3-3:21 is in many respects a lengthy public decree honoring God for God’s immense generosity, and prominent within this paean is the celebration of God’s favor extending to Gentiles as well as Jews. It is noteworthy that the New Testament authors consider even repentance to be, not a human act, but a gift bestowed by God (Acts 11:15-18; 2 Tim 2:25).

<sup>70</sup> The distinction made by D. Howell (“Review of *Despising Shame*,” 163), to the effect that God’s grace is unmerited and unconstrained (while somehow Pliny’s favors are consistently merited and constrained?) is thus a false one. “Grace” always looks to the needs of the recipient, remains free, and can be granted to the meritorious and the notorious by human patrons as well.

<sup>71</sup> The Greco-Roman world, too, did understand the difference between “merited” favors and “unmerited” favors, both of which exhibited the generosity of the giver (but the latter even more so). While we are not deserving of God’s favor (thus favor remains unmerited), the fact that God does extend such favor to us communicates to us our worth in God’s estimation. God shows not only his love for us, but also his regard for us in the quality of the gifts he gives (most poignantly in the laying down of the life of his Son for our sake). It is this communication of both love and esteem that should wash over the hardest heart and dissolve it in a return to God. “A gift is not a benefit if the best part of it is lacking — the fact that it was given as a mark of esteem” (Seneca, *Ben.* 1.15.6; also 4.29.3).

<sup>72</sup> “Kindness” (*chrēstotēs* or its adjectival form) is an important descriptor of benefactors in Danker’s collection of inscriptions (see *Benefactor*, 325-37).

<sup>73</sup> Read Rom 5:6-10 now in this light: God does for enemies what even a virtuous person would hesitate to do for a friend; see also Eph 2:1-6; Tit 3:3-7.

<sup>74</sup> Danker (*Benefactor*, 457) draws a comparison with an inscription from Priene which declares that a certain benefactor named Moschion has proven “worthy of the arete and reputation of his ancestors.”

<sup>75</sup> A comparison between Jesus’ words in Mt 5:45 and Seneca’s words on the gods’ beneficence toward good and wicked alike (see above) is striking indeed, particularly

considering that both use the model of divine beneficence as an impetus to be generous to the good and ungrateful alike.

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, Heb 3:6; 10:20-21; Gal 3:26-4:7; 1 Jn 3:1.

<sup>77</sup> This statement needs to be tempered, however, in light of statements like "many are called, but few are selected": the New Testament does not speak of universal incorporation into the household of God, but only of *potential* universal incorporation. Many recipients of God's beneficence remain quite dead to their obligations of gratitude and persist in their rejection of the divine patron and his invitation to become a part of his household (see, e.g., 2 Cor 4:3-4).

<sup>78</sup> Christians were not alone in this view of God: the Stoic philosopher Epictetus also suggested that a person could find no better patron to whom to attach oneself than God — not even Caesar could compare (*Dissertations* 4.1.91-98).

<sup>79</sup> Look closely at Acts 26:22; 2 Cor 1:9-11; Phil 4:13; 2 Thess 3:1-2; 1 Tim 1:12-15; 2 Tim 3:11; 4:16-18 from this perspective.

<sup>80</sup> Seneca (*Ben.* 4.4.2) speaks in similar terms of divine benefits: people are "conscious of their benefits that sometimes are presented unasked, sometimes are granted in answer to prayer — great and timely gifts, which by their coming remove grave menaces."

<sup>81</sup> See also such texts as Mt 7:7-11; 11:22-24; 21:21-22; Lk 11:9-13, with regard to the granting of the Holy Spirit; Rom 8:32; Jas 1:5-8, with regard to the specific gift of wisdom; 1 Jn 5:14-16.

<sup>82</sup> An interesting development of the belief that God has created and provided all manner of foods for human consumption is that receiving food with thanksgiving (gratitude) to the creator and giver nullifies concerns over defilement or pollution from foods (Rom 14:6; 1 Cor 10:30-31; 1 Tim 4:3-4). Convictions about God as giver override pollution taboos — indeed those very taboos legislated in Torah.

<sup>83</sup> Thus Seneca (*Ep.* 81.21): Gratitude is "a great experience which is the outcome of an utterly happy condition of soul."

<sup>84</sup> See Eph 6:19; 2 Cor 1:10-11; Phil 1:19; 4:6-7; Col 1:3; 4:12; 1 Thess 5:17, 25; 2 Thess 3:1-2; 1 Tim 2:1; Jas 5:15-16; 1 Jn 5:14-16.

<sup>85</sup> A role formerly ascribed to "Wisdom" in Jewish literature: Prov 8:27-31, 35-36; Wis 9:1-2, 9.

<sup>86</sup> See Mt 4:23-25; 8:5-17; 9:18-35, etc; Mk 1:34, 39; 3:10, etc.; Lk 4:40; 5:15; 6:18; 7:21; 9:11, etc. Physicians and healers were considered a kind of benefactor in the Greco-Roman world, as the inscriptions honoring physicians included by Danker (*Benefactor*, 57-64) attest.

<sup>87</sup> See also John 9:30-33; 11:22; 14:6, 13-14; 16:23-27 for passages emphasizing Jesus' mediation of God's favors.

<sup>88</sup> Recall Aristotle's dictum that well-doers merit honor, and Seneca's directions to testify publicly to benefits received as a prime ingredient of gratitude.

<sup>89</sup> So, rightly, Danker, *Benefactor*, 441. Bruce J. Malina (*Windows on the World of Jesus: Time Travel to Ancient Judea* [Louisville: W/JKP, 1993]) offers a peculiar analysis of this passage. From his observations of modern Mediterranean culture, Malina claims that saying "thank you" to a social equal means a breaking off of relations of reciprocity, whereas one does still give thanks to social superiors for their gifts. He suggests that Mediterranean people might empathize more with the nine lepers who do not thank Jesus, who leave the relationship open in case they have needs in the future.

Such a reading, however clever, cannot be supported from the text. Jesus is addressed as a social superior ("Master"), and the petition is cast in terms suggestive of the supplicants' awareness of social inferiority ("have mercy on us"). Jesus' response to the one leper who did return suggests the expectation that the other nine ought to have returned to express gratitude to God for their healing in the presence of the mediator of God's favor. Were Malina correct, we should have found Jesus saying to this Samaritan leper: "You dolt! You think that's the last favor you're going to need from me?!"

<sup>90</sup> This, too, is not wholly unparalleled in Greco-Roman world, as inscriptions give credit not only to the immediate benefactor but also to divine "providence" for providing such a virtuous person for the benefit of humankind (see, for example, the famous inscription from Priene celebrating the benefits conferred on the whole world through Augustus by the divine; translation given in Danker, *Benefactor*, 215-218).

<sup>91</sup> See, among many others, Mt 1:21; Jn 1:29; Acts 5:31; 1 Cor 15:3; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 1:4; Col 1:19-20, 22; 2:13-14; Heb 2:14-15; 1 Pet 3:18.

<sup>92</sup> Danker (*Benefactor*, 417-435) calls this the "endangered benefactor" motif, and documents that it was widely applied to those who braved dangers, incurred risks, or shouldered inordinate expenses for the public good or the good of others. "He gave himself for others" is common diction honoring such a benefactor (Danker, *Benefactor*, 321-323). In the New Testament, see 1 John 3:16-17 (which also expresses the appropriate response to such beneficence); the words of institution at the Last Supper (e.g., Lk 22:19-22); Mt 20:28; 26:26-28; Mk 10:45; Lk 22:19-20; Jn 6:51; Jn 10:11, 15, 17-18; Jn 15:13; 2 Cor 8:9; Gal 1:4; 3:13; Eph 5:2; 1 Tim 2:6; Tit 2:14; Heb 2:9; 7:27; 13:12; Rev 1:5; 5:9-10.

<sup>93</sup> The decision of the NRSV translators to render *charis* here as "generous act" is most astute, combining an emphasis both on the giver's disposition and the resulting benefaction.

<sup>94</sup> Priests were seen, in general, as the parties who "managed" relationships with the divine, restoring favor, mediating thanks, and securing gifts from the divine. Heb 5:1 captures, by way of general definition, the essence of priesthood as standing between human beings before God on behalf of human beings. The Latin word for priest, *pontifex*, or "bridge-maker," also underscored the mediatorial (=brokering) nature of the priest's role.

<sup>95</sup> Hebrews 1-10 contains many topics geared to "amplify" the favor (gift of access) conferred by Jesus (thus amplifying also the corresponding sense of indebtedness to the giver). Aristotle (*Rhetoric* 2.7.1) wrote that a favor "is great if shown to one who is in great need, or who needs what is important and hard to get, or who needs it at an important and difficult crisis; or if the helper is the only, the first, or the chief person to give the help." Jesus is consistently celebrated in Hebrews as the "first" and "only" broker (mediator) to succeed in conferring the gift of direct access to God (see, e.g., Heb 7:11-28; 9:6-15; 10:1-14).

<sup>96</sup> Other texts emphasizing Jesus' gift of a new access to God's favor and assistance include John 16:26-27; Rom 8:34; Eph 2:18; 3:11-12; 1 Tim 2:5-6; Heb 10:19-23; 1 Pet 1:21; Rev 1:6 (making us priests means bestowing access to God).

<sup>97</sup> 2 Cor 1:3-7; 4:7-15; 6:4-10 (esp 6:10); Eph 3:1-2, 13; Col 1:24-25; 2:1; 1 Thess 2:8-9 (where he emphasizes that he has not been a burden on the "public" in the execution of



his office).

<sup>98</sup> Paul does not use this to "lord it over" his converts (and he takes explicit pains to avoid giving this impression; 2 Cor 1:24), but he does remind his addressees of their debt to him at times when he is uncertain of their response and needs to use his trump card (as perhaps in Philem 18-19) or when fidelity to Paul is at stake (as in 2 Corinthians).

<sup>99</sup> Seneca (*Ben.* 4.15.3) speaks of the tendency of human patrons to give repeatedly to those they have helped in the past: "How often will you hear a man say: 'I cannot bear to desert him, for I have given him his life, I have rescued him from peril. He now begs me to plead his cause against men of influence; I do not want to, but what can I do? I have already helped him once, no, twice.' Do you not see that there is, inherent in the thing itself, some peculiar power that compels us to give benefits, first, because we ought, then, because we have already given them?... We continue to bestow because we have already bestowed." The investment God and Christ have already made in us becomes a cause for confidence of their continued favor and investment in the faithful, an assurance of future help. In Paul's words, "He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else?" (Rom 8:32).

<sup>100</sup> See Danker, *Benefactor*, 324-25.

<sup>101</sup> The objection raised by Howell ("Review of *Despising Shame*," 163) that, somehow in contrast to "the giving and receiving of benefactions in the patronal society of Greece," Christians realize that they can never repay the favors of God. This is, however, a point that resonates strongly and specifically with Greco-Roman patronage, for the client, being a social inferior to the patron, was not in a position to "repay" the patron, hence expressed his or her gratitude by some other means than offering an equally valuable gift in the future. Aristotle (*Nic. Eth.* 1163b15-18) knew that the favors of the gods and of parents can never be adequately repaid, with the result that the person who pays them all the regard he or she can is deemed virtuous. With regard to human patrons, Seneca envisions the situation where a recipient shows his gratitude thus: "I may not be able to repay you, but at the least I shall not refrain from declaring everywhere that I cannot repay you" (*Ben.* 2.24.4). He discourses also at some length (*Ben.* 7.16.1-4) about the recipient who has taken great pains to try to return a benefit, being watchful for the opportunity but simply not finding a way to help one who is far greater than himself or herself: "the one should say, 'I have received,' the other, 'I still owe'."

<sup>102</sup> The declaration of God's *aretai* resembles the use of this term in honorary inscriptions, where it means not just virtue but "demonstration of character and exceptional performance" (Danker, *Benefactor*, 318). This aspect of response to divine benefits is deeply rooted in the worship of Israel (see Ps 96:1-4; 105:1-2; 107; 116:12-18).

<sup>103</sup> Early Christians frequently had reason to hide their attachment to Jesus and his followers, since association with that group brought suspicion, reproach, even physical abuse and financial ruin (see Heb 10:32-34; 1 Pet 4:14-16). Keeping silence about one's patron, and denying his gifts through their silence, was not an option for virtuous recipients of favor. Recall Seneca's admonition (*Ben.* 2.23.1): "As the giver should add

to his gift only that measure of publicity which will please the one to whom he gives it, so the recipient should invite the whole city to witness it; a debt that you are ashamed to acknowledge you should not accept."

<sup>104</sup> In John 15:8, Jesus says that the Father is glorified when Jesus' followers "bear much fruit and be[come] my disciples." The vagueness of this expression (the "fruit" is never specified in John) may have been quite intentional, alerting the readers to watch for all possible opportunities to "be fruitful" to the increase of God's honor, whether that be in good works that point to the Source of all goodness, in making new disciples, or simply in internalizing ever more fully the life of discipleship as taught by Jesus and his apostles.

<sup>105</sup> Although I deeply appreciate Dietrich Bonhoeffer's challenging words on "cheap grace" and "costly grace" in *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Collier, 1959), the concept of "costly gratitude" might have served his point better (avoiding any misunderstandings that grace could be acquired or purchased). His argument is, of course, that gifts costing the Son so dearly must rouse us to make a like return.

<sup>106</sup> Recall Seneca, *Ben.* 4.24.2: "It is the ungrateful man who thinks: 'I should have liked to return gratitude, but I fear the expense, I fear the danger, I shrink from giving offense; I would rather consult my own interest.'"

<sup>107</sup> 1 Pet 2:19-20 contains the enigmatic phrases *touto gar charis* and *touto charis para theō(i)*. The NRSV renders these "it is a credit to you" and "you have God's approval," but in both obscures the more immediate impression of the words: "this is a gift"; "this is a gift from God" (or "this is [the manifestation of] favor before God").

<sup>108</sup> In an oration on the reasons for distrust, Dio points out that "what someone has said about Fortune might much rather be said about human beings, that no one knows about any one whether he will remain as he is until the morrow," changing his word and breaking agreements as his advantage leads (*Or.* 74.21-22). There is no such lack of "constancy" (*Or.* 74.4) in the Christian's patron, Jesus, affirms the author of Hebrews.

<sup>109</sup> Consider the similar logic in 1 Pet 1:17-21: The believers have an obligation to conduct themselves in such a way as shows reverence for God (1:17) because of the acts of beneficence already performed for them by God in Jesus, namely being ransomed at no less a price than Jesus' own lifeblood — a price foreseen before creation itself (the topic of forethought in beneficence was common: see Acts 24:2-4 for but one example). They thus owe God more than they would owe any human benefactor who effected their deliverance through the paying of a ransom in gold or silver (already a staggering debt of gratitude). The beneficent intent of God in the incarnation and passion of Jesus is underscored again as "on your account" (δι' ὑμᾶς, 1:20).

<sup>110</sup> See, rightly, Danker, *Benefactor*, 451. Other passages deserving attention in this context are Rom 12:1 and Eph 4:1 (which begin to outline the proper response to the beneficence celebrated in Rom 1-11 and Eph 1-3) and Heb 13:15-16, which describes the proper demonstration of "gratitude" and "reverent service" (Heb 12:28) to be rendered to God by those his Son has cleansed, to whom he gave access to God's favor and presence, whom he will yet "perfect" by leading them into the unshakable realm.

<sup>111</sup> Recall Seneca's attempt to do the same, directing patrons and benefactors to imitate the gods, who lavish their gifts on the sacrilegious and indifferent as well as the pious (*Ben.* 1.1.9; 4.25.1; 4.26.1; 4.28.1), acting ever in accordance with their own character and virtue, even in the face of lack of virtue.

<sup>112</sup> Failure to do so inevitably insults the giver, who gives in the expectation that a gift will be utilized and used in a manner suitable to its worth (the person given a precious artefact should not put it in the attic, nor use it for a spittoon, for example).

<sup>113</sup> See also Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:4-11; Eph 4:7-16.

<sup>114</sup> Danker, *Benefactor*, 453-466.

<sup>115</sup> On the frequent occurrence of the verb *epichorēgeō* in reference to the activity of benefactors, see Danker, *Benefactor*, 331-332.

<sup>116</sup> Forgetfulness of benefits is strongly censured by Seneca (*Ben.* 3.1.3-3.3.2), as also in Cicero, *De officiis* 2.63: "all people hate forgetfulness of benefactions, thinking it to be an injury against themselves since it discourages generosity and the ingrate to be the common enemy of the needy." We should expect 2 Pet 1:9 to arouse similar disgust and shame, leading the hearers to take care to pursue the course recommended by the author that shows mindfulness of God's favors.

<sup>117</sup> For a close analysis of patron-client and "grace" scripts at work in the pastoral strategy of this text, see my "Exchanging Favor for Wrath: Apostasy in Hebrews and Patron-Client Relations," *JBL* 115 (1996) 91-116; on Heb 6:4-8 specifically, see my "Hebrews 6:4-8: A Socio-Rhetorical Investigation," *Tyndale Bulletin* 50.1 (1999) and 50.2 (1999).

<sup>118</sup> Agricultural images are common in classical texts on patronage and reciprocity: Seneca frequently compares giving to sowing seed, grateful clients to good soil, ingrates to worn out soil (*Ben.* 1.1.2; 2.11.4-5; 4.8.2; 4.33.1-2). Pseudo-Phocylides (the real name of the author of this Jewish collection of wise advice is unknown) similarly writes: "Do no good to a bad man; it is like sowing into the sea" (*Sentences*, 152).

<sup>119</sup> Heb 10:26-31 offers an even more intense depiction of the significance of withdrawing from open association with the Christian community in the hope of getting back in the good graces of society: the value of the gift and what it cost the Giver are despised by such life choices, and the honor of Jesus, whose favor has been trampled, is avenged by God the Judge in the punishment of the ingrates.

<sup>120</sup> Luke lays special emphasis on this point: only in his gospel are we told how to provide ourselves with these "treasures in heaven," namely by charitable giving, and only in his gospel is the challenge poised at the young rich man also poised to all who would follow Jesus (see especially 14:33). This conviction is developed in the second-century Christian text, *Shepherd of Hermas*, Similitude 1.

<sup>121</sup> "'Whatever I have given, that I still possess!' ... These are the riches that will abide, and remain steadfast amid all the fickleness of our human lot; and, the greater they become, the less envy they will arouse. Why do you spare your wealth as though it were your own? You are but a steward.... Do you ask how you can make them your own? By bestowing them as gifts! Do you, therefore, make the best of your possessions, and, by making them, not only safer, but more honorable, render your own claim to them assured and inviolable" (*Ben.* 6.3.1, 3).

<sup>122</sup> Compare Seneca, *Ben.* 1.7.1: "Sometimes we feel under greater obligations to one who has given small gifts out of a great heart, who 'by his spirit matched the gift of kings', who bestowed his little, but gave it gladly, who beholding my poverty forgot his own." Also striking is the similarity between Seneca's and Jesus' evaluations of gifts from the rich and from those of poor means. "A gift has been made by someone of a large sum of money, but the giver was rich, he was not likely to feel the sacrifice; the



same gift was made by another, but the giver was likely to lose the whole of his patrimony. The sum given is the same, but the benefit is not the same" (*Ben.* 3.8.2). Compare this with the story of the Widow's Mite (Lk 21:1-4).

<sup>123</sup> This theme will recur throughout early Christian literature. The *Acts of Peter*, for example, promotes the awareness that the benefactions of wealthy Christians are presented as examples "of Christ's care for his own" (R. F. Stoops, Jr., "Patronage in the *Acts of Peter*," *Semeia* 38 [1986] 91-100, p. 94) that result in praise and thanks to Jesus rather than as the means by which rich people enhance their own prestige in the community. Their gifts are not to advance his personal power but are given on the basis of their loyalty to Jesus (p. 98; *Acts of Peter* 19); see also Clement of Alexandria's sermon, "On the Rich Man who Enters Heaven."

<sup>124</sup> Another model used to communicate the ideal of Christian giving is that of friendship. Luke presents the earliest community of believers fulfilling the ancient ideal of friendship, where friends, united by a common commitment to virtue, "hold all things in common" (Aristotle, *Nic. Eth.* 8.11; 1159b31): no one considered his or her property to be "his own," but rather treated it as the common property of all the believers and used his or her property to relieve need wherever it arose (Acts 4:32-35). Within this relationship there was sharing without power-plays.

<sup>125</sup> Spiritual favors and material favors can be exchanged in the reciprocal relationships between believers and churches: the latter is certainly not more "real" than the former, and even less glowing. See Rom 1:11-12; 15:26-27; 1 Cor 9:11; Gal 6:6.

## **Ethics and Community**

by Thomas L. Michaels\*

Christian ethics in the modern world seems to have generally taken one of two tracks. Either it has become ossified as a rigid set of rules and regulations of behavior or it has followed the world's example and reached a point of flexibility wherein nearly any activity is permissible and acceptable in a context where individual rights supersede any other consideration. These extreme points are often used to help describe the stance of conservative and liberal Christian factions. Unfortunately neither side has maintained a Christian perspective on ethics as found in the Pauline writings of the New Testament.

John Howard Yoder has sought to describe "the connection which might relate New Testament studies with contemporary social ethics" or "how Jerusalem can relate to Athens" and that "Bethlehem has something to say about Rome."<sup>1</sup> This writer concurs with Yoder's position that Jesus is relevant and necessary for normative Christian ethics.

The objective of this paper is to understand the Pauline context of Christian ethics by reviewing the historical basis for ethical behavior and then using this to discover the intentions of Paul as he instructs the churches of his time. We will close by examining our present culture from that Pauline context.

Ethical behavior in ancient times took on forms which dealt with the relationships between people. One of the earliest models is the Suzerain-vassal model on which many scholars believe the Mosaic covenant is based. According to *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* this covenant form "was merely a device for communicating values envisioning human relationships proceeding along some moral plan higher than coercive force."<sup>2</sup>

This Hittite formulation has several characteristics.<sup>3</sup>

**1. Identification of the covenant giver:** Here the great and powerful king identifies himself and bestows a gracious relationship upon an inferior. The exclusivity of this relationship is understood. Turning away from this relationship by the inferior is treason and subjects the inferior to a penalty of death.

**2. The historical prologue:** The idea of reciprocity is inherent in this section. The great king narrates his past actions for the benefit of the vassal. The appropriate response of the vassal then becomes gratitude and obedience to the requests of the great king.

**3. The stipulations:** This section describes the interests of the great

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king which the vassal is bound to protect under the covenant relationship.

4. **The provision for deposit and periodic public reading:** The treaty and its contents are incorporated into the operating value system of the vassal kingdom. It was read regularly to the people to keep it before them.

5. **The list of witnesses to the treaty:** The witnesses to the treaty were always deities or deified elements of the natural world.

6. **The blessings and curses:** Because the witnesses were considered supernatural, those same deities were to carry out the blessings and curses which would come for obedience or disobedience to the activities required under the treaty.

7. **The ratification ceremony:** The ratification ceremony was centered on the sacrifice of an animal. The animal represented the vassal and his kingdom who would be likewise slaughtered if the covenant was violated.

8. **The imposition of curses:** The implied right of the great king was to declare the covenant invalid upon the disobedience of the vassal nation. At such time the protection and benefits of the great king were withdrawn. If such occurred, then the logical and likely instrument of destruction of the vassal nation was the great king himself.

The similarity of this model to the Mosaic covenant is obvious. However, the most significant characteristic of this model for our discussion is the basis of relationship which is established therein. The Mosaic covenant including the laws and ordinances should not, therefore, be seen as a set of rules or regulations to be strictly accomplished by rote. Such a perception destroys the intent of the covenant to establish a basis for continuing relationship between the great king and the vassal.

A careful reading of the prophets will convey this as the claim which God brought against the people of Israel. The condemnation found in Micah and Amos (among others) relates an empty performance of rites which God rejects. The people's relationship with God has become ossified and meaningless in the activities of the daily lives. In other words, the ethical impact of their relationship with God is missing. The accusations of injustice, greed, and vice which God brings against Israel witness to this fact. Unless the vassal nation of Israel returns to its covenant relationship with God, God himself will destroy them. Ethics here is not separated from daily living or from a proper relationship with God. Ethical failure, in the form of breaking the covenant, however, is the basis for God's action against Israel and Judah.

The second model we wish to review is the city-state model of ancient Greece. The city-state was the unity of government in ancient Greece. The virtues of acknowledged by an community would be defined by that community. While the virtues of each city-state might be defined differently,



one's observance of these virtues would define one's citizenship. Freedom in this setting was defined as doing what one knew to be required. It was not doing whatever makes one feel good, as in our society today.

The final model for understanding ethical behavior comes from the Greco-Roman world in which Paul lived. The benefactor-client model dominated relationships in these times. The benefactor-client relationship was foundational for the Greco-Roman world. It defined relationships at all levels of society. John Chow provides the following list of common features of the patron-client relationship.<sup>4</sup>

1. It is an **exchange relationship**. The patron provides what the client needs and the client gives the patron the object or service he desires.

2. It is an **asymmetrical relationship**. The patron and client are not equal in terms of power or resources.

3. It is **particularistic and informal**. It strengthens the bonds between them.

4. It is usually a **supra-legal relationship**. It is based on mutual understanding and not on a worldly legal system. Hence it is often subtle.

5. It is a **binding and long-range relationship**. There is a strong sense of interpersonal obligation.

6. It is a **voluntary relationship**. However, the client may have no other place to turn to for help.

7. It is a **vertical relationship**. It discourages the multiple patron relationships, although clients may find commonality in their diversity through their patron.

Frederick Danker has done extensive work on the subject of patronage. He describes both Jesus and Paul as endangered benefactors.

In his earthly life Jesus manifested himself as a benefactor through mighty words and deeds. His crucifixion is the climactic expression of his willingness to accept the consequences of identifying with God's intention to relate to the needs of humanity at any and every social level.<sup>5</sup>

Paul's imitation of Christ places him in a similar endangered benefactor position which Paul occasionally describes in his epistles. However, such a model provides a sense that we are to become benefactors, even endangered, to those around us who do not know of Christ's benefactor on behalf of us all.

In the Greco-Roman world the interrelationship between households and *polis* is key to our understanding of Paul's writings.

Greco-Roman political writers understood the household to be the basic building block of the state. Cities, they

observed, are composed of households... Some political philosophers...gave the discussion of the household a specific form: Aristotelians and Neo-Pythagoreans were concerned about the relationship of authority and subordination between three pairs: husbands and wives, fathers and children..., and masters and slaves.<sup>6</sup>

That Paul highlights these same relationships in his letters should not be overlooked. The form of the first century church was the household. Therefore, these same relationships become important expressions of that first century Christianity.

Even more, the benefactor-client relationship often expanded the household influence far beyond a traditional twentieth century understanding. Such influence frequently reached into the homes of servants and slaves, business associations, community involvement, and religious expression. As an example, the range of influence of the imperial household reached far beyond the immediate royal family. Its expanse was as wide as the Roman empire.

Paul understood and used the concepts of *polis* and its unit, the household, to express the new relationships which Jesus Christ offers. He further used the reality of benefaction to express Christ's position in these relationships, and the Mosaic covenant, most often expressed as the Law, to define the part which God the Father plays in this new age. This idea can easily be identified in Paul's customary greeting, "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" and his benediction, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." The relationship of the household is expressed as God our Father and the benefaction relationship with Jesus in the expression of grace and the title of lord. Further uses of benefaction language can be found in Galatians 5:1-3 and Romans 5:6-8.

In Philippians Paul specifically conveys the image of the *polis* to the new community when we are "in Christ." In Philippians 1:27 and 3:20 Paul uses forms of this word to indicate our citizenship in a new community, the community of God, which has replaced our loyalty to worldly kingdoms. Jesus, through his death, has offered to become our benefactor. Only our response as faithful clients remain to claim this new relationship which is offered to us.

In benefactor-client relationships, there was often a broker who mediated the relationship. Jesus came from God to Israel in such a function. That is why he came not to the Gentiles but to Israel. God had functioned as the great king of Israel, as their benefactor. When the Jews crucified Christ, they also rejected the benefaction of God. But through this same act Jesus became the benefactor of all who believe in him.

With Christ as our benefactor we now must live our lives in accordance to the "law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2): To love our neighbor as ourselves (Gal. 5:14). Our love for God is omitted here, not because it is invalid, but because as we accept our position as clients of Christ our adoption by God is understood. Our relationship with God is secure and only our relationship with each other remains by which and through which the truthfulness and fullness of our relationship to God through Christ is testified to. Therein, the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit witness not only to our relationship with each other but to our relationship with God. They are the measure of our Christian ethics. In this relationship we are free in the classical sense: we are able to be and do what we have been created for. Like a fish out of water, our lives are threatened when sin removes us from relationship with God. Freedom and life is found only in the water for a fish, and only "in Christ" for humanity.

Christian ethics in this Pauline context then become the measure of our faithfulness to our covenant with God. It is not dependent on the strict obedience to paranetic material which Paul includes in several of his letters. Rather, in these portions of virtue/vice lists and household codes, Paul seeks to highlight the relationships and the actions which should be influenced and determined by our relationship "in Christ."

The benefactor relationship with Christ is also to be the model for other relationships we have. Paul repeats several times the relationships between master and slave, husband and wife, father and child. But Paul also announces the destruction of barriers which have prevented persons from relationships: Jew and Gentile, slave or free, male or female (Gal. 3:28).

The context for Christian ethics then runs parallel to that of the ancient Greeks: being "in Christ" becomes the community, the *polis*, wherein our virtues and actions are defined. The "head" of this nation is Jesus Christ. He is our Lord, our benefactor, by virtue of his death and resurrection on our behalf. By extending his grace to us and through our acceptance of it we establish a relationship through which we continue to experience his grace, and wherein we must continue to worship, praise, and serve him.

As Yoder has indicated, Christian ethics without a relationship to Christ is impossible. From this relationship, a relationship based on faith and the experience of Christ's grace, our moral actions and position must be drawn. We must define our ethical behavior in this relationship. This precludes the use of violence, violence which cannot be defined just in terms of the destruction of human lives, but rather more broadly in the destruction of our human relationships (1 John 4:20-21).

In Galatians, a structural analysis of the letter demonstrates that Paul and his opponents agree that the law cannot bring salvation. The Galatian Christians have misunderstood the message of the Judaizers and now seek the



law as a means to salvation. Paul's argument against his opponents essentially was that to associate oneself with the jews is to identify with those who have rejected the relationship which God desires to have with his people. This identification as the people of God (Israel) was exactly what the Judaizers were seeking to have the Gentile Christians embrace, but to Paul it was to "cut yourselves off from Christ; you have fallen away from grace" (Gal. 5:4). Essentially Paul was viewing the nation of Israel through the eyes of the suzerain-vassal formula. God has rejected Israel because of its disobedience, because of its rejection of Jesus and its attempt to destroy him. To associate oneself to Israel is to associate with the way which God has rejected. Paul offers a better way.

The writings of Paul, especially from an ethical perspective, become quite understandable when viewed with an understanding of the benefactor-client model. Paul even views the Torah from such a perspective. The similarities between the Suzerain-vassal formula and the benefaction model provides Paul with a good perception of the Torah at this point. The understanding of the Gentiles was also facilitated by use of the benefactor model, and through Paul's parallel use of the "in Christ" for the "polis" as a basis for understanding the virtues which Paul describes as fruits of the Spirit and through his drawing in paranetic material such as virtue-vice lists and household codes.

How then does this relate to our world today? The benefactor-client relationship is often dismissed as archaic or inappropriate in our society. In its place we find the declaration of individual rights. But such a condition destroys the traditional basis for relationships. As such we should expect the deterioration of relationships which we have experienced in our society. With no relationships of value to be maintained, there is no community. Without community the definition of virtues is absent and license is granted for any action which the individual deems to be appropriate. Freedom is redefined to include license rather than obligation. Even the sanctity of human life is sacrificed in such a state. Ethical behavior is impossible without community; and community fails without relationships; and relationships without a foundation by which they may be maintained cannot be valued or conserved.

What the is the answer to this dilemma? It remains as clear in our day as it was in Paul's. We who have the ears to hear must be obedient to God's call to demonstrate to this world the unique opportunities for relationships which brings value and purpose to life. We who find our community and relationship in Christ must witness to the validity of that relationship in this society. It will take more than words, more than demonstrations of love, more than reaching out to others. It requires drawing others into our community and discipling them, teaching them of the relationships to which Christ calls us all.

It means being an ambassador from the kingdom to which we now belong to those in whose communities of this world where we now live. Paul understood this need in his day (2 Cor. 5:17-21).

This is the ethical responsibility to which our faith calls us: not an ethic of rigid rules and regulations, not an ethic of license and individual rights; nor even an ethic of giving without an expectations. But rather an ethic which finds its expression arising out of a relationship with God through the grace of Jesus Christ. An ethic which possesses the reasonable expectations of response, not to our feeble efforts, but to God's work through us as an expression of our relationship to Him. An ethic which seeks to build a community in which the virtues of Christ are manifested and experienced by all who come. Being in Christ is our new *polis*, our new community. Being a child of God is the new household to which we belong within that community. Being grateful clients to our benefactor, our Lord Jesus Christ, we must act in ways which bring praise and honor to him. We will know we are fulfilling these responsibilities when we who are the branches, grafted into the vine which is Christ, bloom, and the fruits of the Spirit take form and ripen in us.

#### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1972), 13.
- <sup>2</sup> George E. Mendenhall and Gary A. Herion, "Covenant," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, edited by David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1201.
- <sup>3</sup> "Covenant," 1180-1182.
- <sup>4</sup> John K. Chow, *Patronage and Power* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 30-33.
- <sup>5</sup> Frederick W. Danker, *Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Greco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field* (St. Louis: Clayton Publishing House, 1982), 423.
- <sup>6</sup> John E. Stambaugh and David L. Balch, *The New Testament in it's Social Environment* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1986), 123.

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## **Concepts and Our Understanding of Them**

James P. Danaher\*

It is difficult to say exactly what a concept or mental representation is, but as difficult as it might be to understand such things, their existence is undeniable. To begin with, concepts, for nearly everyone since the time of Aristotle, have been the things to which words refer (Aristotle 16a3-9). Except for proper nouns, words are given meaning or signification as they refer not to things but to concepts. These concepts are general ideas that unite and organize our experience. By grouping our experiences, which are always particular, these concepts allow us to speak and think in ways that would be otherwise impossible.

Among the Ancients and Medievals, most believed that our concepts or mental representations organized our experience into a correct understanding of the world. That is, that just as our perceptions are reliable because God has equipped us with perceivers that accurately reflect His creation, we are also equipped with the ability to conceptualize and group those perceptions correctly as well. Unlike our Ancient and Medieval ancestors who believed that we possessed a God-given ability to correctly conceptualize the world, today maintaining that belief is extremely difficult. Even if one believes that God did originally give us concepts that represented a correct conceptual understanding of the world, the fact seems undeniable that human beings and their language communities can create completely new concepts and refine and change existing ones. The fact that concepts change over time, and from one culture to another, is evidence of the fact that we can conceptualize our experience in a vast variety of ways.

Of course, we do have some sort of mental hardware that allows us to form concepts, and it is very possible that this hardware even universally prevents us from conceiving some things other than we do. Equally, the nature of some experiences may be such that alternative conceptual judgments are not possible. But in spite of all that, we have an enormous freedom in our ability to form concepts.

This freedom can easily be seen in children as they begin to acquire language. Their earliest concepts are often very different from the concepts that their language community associates with a particular signifier or word. The first concept a child might form and identify with the word *dog* might be a very general notion that includes many kinds of pets, or it may be very narrow

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and include characteristics unique to the child's own dog. It is only as more instances of the signifier *dog* are identified that the child's concept becomes something close to that of the language community. Thus, with their exposure to language the child's initial freedom to form concepts becomes restricted and their concepts are molded and come to conform to those held by the language community. Such conformity, however, is not toward some absolute concept which represents objective reality. Indeed, the concept or signification that our language community attaches to a particular word is arbitrary, at least in the sense that there exists an enormous amount of alternative ways that we can group our experiences into the concepts to which we attach words. Although our perceptual reality may be based upon an objective physical world, our conceptual reality is based largely upon the various ways our language community and culture have come to divide up the world.

Our culture chooses to distinguish black people from white people and we form concepts that allow for such a distinction, but an almost infinite variety of other conceptual races could be established based on an equally infinite variety of characteristics. Our concepts of black people and white people are clearly the result of a choice to form one specific concept of race rather than hundreds of other possible concepts. With diseases it is equally easy to see that the essential characteristics we select to form concepts are obviously nominal and the product of judgments rather than any God-given ability to form correct concepts. But if our concepts of things like races and diseases are nominal and of our own creation, then all, or nearly all, of our concepts are suspect. In order for us to claim any of our concepts as natural or God-given, we need to show why we believe such concepts have a status above being nominal and more than the product of human judgment and convention. Without a criterion to separate nominal from natural (or God-given) concepts, all concepts must be treated as nominal, and thus conceptual reality must be understood as a cultural and linguistic construct.

Furthermore, since the time of Saussure, most linguistic theories have maintained that the nominal concepts to which words refer are established by the rest of the language system, and do not have individual or atomic meanings in themselves. What gives meaning to the word *dog* is not so much a single definition, as it is the fact that the word *dog* refers to that which is not a cat or wolf. Thus, the signification or meaning of a signifier depends not on its relationship to something within the world, nor even to a single individual concept, but to a whole system of signifiers and what they signify (Saussure 120-122). Additionally, since language is dynamic and open to arbitrary changes over time, a change in the meaning or signification of one word changes the signification of another word.

In light of these contemporary insights into the nature of language,

today's Christian is faced with a problem of how to understand Scripture. If the words of Scripture and their signification are relative to the rest of language, and language is dynamic and ever changing, how is such a language able to express eternal and immutable truths? To put it another way, how can God use human language with its human, mutable concepts to represent or express His concepts which, since they are not the product of our language community, are most likely not at all like our concepts?

One possible solution to the problem of our mutable concepts which are subject to the vicissitudes of culture, language, and human judgment is to establish immutable concepts founded upon the basic forms of the phenomenal world. Some Christians have been attracted to something like Husserl's quest to discover the true rational essences or concepts that are the irreducible stuff of the phenomenal world (Husserl 340-44).

Such a project encounters a variety of problems. Two are particularly important. The first is that even if a Husserlian eidetic reduction did overcome the conventional and ever-changing nature of our concepts, such concepts, and the language that would be based upon them, would not help us with the problem of understanding the concepts set forth in Scripture since the Scripture was written without the aid of such phenomenological concepts. The second problem with such a project is that even if correct rational essences were achievable, and such essences did represent the basic forms by which God organized the phenomenal world, such essences are not very interesting and not what we ultimately desire. I believe our real interest or desire is not to discover concepts that represent the basic forms of the phenomenal world, but to discover concepts that represent God's intentional meaning. I am not so much interested in how God conceives the physical species of plants and animals. I am interested, however, to know how God conceptualizes things like love and faith. This is what I desire in order to know Him more intimately. But since the concepts I attach to words such as *love* and *faith* are relative to my language community and culture, I do not know the meaning or signification that God would attach to such signifiers.

Attempting to solve this problem by the kind of eidetic reduction Husserl had proposed might overcome the conventional nature of our concepts but it would not give us what we are really after, which is God's intentional meaning. To come to an understanding of God's concepts, we need to move in the opposite direction. That is, unlike the projects of Husserl or Kant, which attempted to overcome the personal and subjective nature of concepts, the concepts we seek are purely personal and subjective. Indeed, the concepts we seek to know are those personal and subjective concepts that exist within the noetic reality that is the mind of God. Before we can pursue an understanding of such concepts, however, we first need to more fully understand the way



these personal concepts are distinct from either the common concepts that lie at the base of our language communities, or the strict and rigid concepts that lie at the base of our scientific communities.

### **The Multifarious Nature of a Concept**

Concepts are certainly multifarious and this is at least partially because human beings, and their language, function on several levels and thus so must their concepts. Wittgenstein acknowledges this when he says that we can create exact concepts for specific purposes and that these concepts stand as additions to the concepts we use for common language (Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* 68-69). Thus, there is the common concept of "water" which I communicate in order to satisfy my thirst, and there is an exact concept of "H<sub>2</sub>O" which allows me to communicate a more precise meaning of the same signifier. But besides the common concept, and the more exact concept of water used by science, there is a concept of water that represents the stuff I played in as a child. This concept exists on a deeper level and is the kind of concept I wish to communicate in my more intimate communions. This deeper, personal concept goes far beyond the concept that the language community commonly holds. It is my private concept of "water" which has a unique meaning only to me, but it is nevertheless a concept that I sometimes wish to communicate to another human being (usually someone with whom I am intimate). The concept of water I communicate at this level is neither common nor scientific, but personal, and its meaning goes far beyond what is communicated on the common or scientific level.

On the common level, or even the precise scientific level, a concept is little more than a commonly understood boundary that separates one kind from another, while on the deeper and more personal level, a concept is really not common at all. Plato's idea of a concept as an *eidōs* or what is common to all members of a species only applies to the common or scientific notions of a concept and omits completely the idea of a personal concept (Plato 72-79).

Unlike Plato, and nearly the entire tradition that followed him, Wittgenstein understood that language, and its concepts, function differently in different situations, and for different purposes (Wittgenstein, *Blue and Brown Books* 1). In common communication, we use concepts for the purpose of utility, and thus knowing the intentional meaning of a speaker is not important, but at other times when we wish to communicate for the purpose of intimacy, the intentional meaning or personal concept of the speaker is what we are after. Thus, with our common concepts the concept is most often used as a means to identify the extensions of that concept, while with our personal concepts the instances or extensions of the concept are the means, and the purpose is to communicate the concept itself. Of course, an exact

communication of such an intentional meaning is impossible, but the purpose of this deeper communication is not to establish the kind of exactness sought in the sciences but to share with another person the way one uniquely conceptualizes the world.

### **How Personal Concepts Are Communicated**

The way in which personal concepts are communicated is very similar to the way common concepts are communicated to us in our initial exposure to language. As we saw earlier, a child's concept may begin as something very different from that of their language community. It is shaped, however, as additional instances of a given signifier or word are provided. With the additional instances, eventually the child's concept becomes something close to the concept held by the language community at large. Likewise, the same is true regarding the communication of personal concepts. Here, however, the additional instances of a given signifier are all given by the same person, and the intention is not to understand a publically held concept in order to function within that language community, but rather to understand a personal concept in order to more intimately know that individual.

With human beings personal concepts may begin as common concepts acquired through language, but because they become concepts that are of particular interest and importance to us we attach additional meaning and significance to them. Such concepts often more genuinely define us than our occupations or social statuses, and they are what we want others to know about us. Such concepts represent the objects of our greatest interest and affection. The man who loves dogs has a very different concept of those animals than other members of the language community. He is familiar with the common concept, but his concept includes things that the one who is not a dog lover would have difficulty imagining. Similarly, the man whose interest is money has a concept of money that goes far beyond the concept others signify by the same word.

Ortega y Gasset says:

In truth, nothing characterizes us as much as our field of attention ... This formula might well be accepted: tell me where your attention lies and I will tell you who you are. (Ortega y Gasset 26)

This is certainly true, but our field of attention is always conceptually constructed. It is not what we perceive, that makes something important to us, but how we conceive it. More than our finger prints, the things that most truly identify and personalize us are those personal concepts which we have given

much time and attention to develop. These are the things we are often most attracted to in another person, and these are the things we share in our most intimate relationships.

In a marriage one way a spouse intimately communicates to their mate is by expressing the unique intentional meaning they attribute to certain important concepts. The first step in such communication is for the spouse to convince their mate that what they mean by a certain signifier is not what is commonly meant, and that the concept to which a signifier commonly or even scientifically refers is of little use on this personal level. Without understanding our natural estrangement from the personal concepts of others, we will never even begin to enter into communication on this deeper and more personal level.

After my wife has convinced me that I do not understand a particular concept that is important and unique to her, she then gives instances of what she does mean. As she sets out additional instances of her particular concept, I come ever closer to an understanding of her intentional meaning, just as I had through a similar process come to understand the public concept referenced by that word. The main difference lies in the fact that the private or personal concept is much more complex and includes many more aspects unique to my wife's experiences, judgments, and values. These unique aspects would certainly be eliminated from the public concept of that same signifier.

### **Knowing God's Concepts**

To understand God's concepts, we need first to understand that neither the common concepts of our language community, nor the exact concepts of our science have equipped us to understand God's intentional meaning. Yet that does not mean that God is unable to communicate His meaning to us. If we consider that human beings are able to express their personal concepts by using the common concepts of their language community, it is not surprising that God can do the same. Indeed, God can make His concepts known to us, just as we can make our personal concepts known to others who are interested and give us enough time in order that we might express instances that denote our personal concepts.

In order to intimately know my wife, I need to know how she uniquely conceptualizes the world. I begin by understanding that I am not naturally equipped with concepts that enable me to know her most important and unique concepts. The same is true of my relationship with God. More so than with other human beings, our communion with God is especially estranged since God's concepts do not originate within a common language community or culture the way the concepts of human beings do. Thus, in order for me to enter the fullness of communion with Him, it is especially important that my



mind be renewed, and much of that renewal requires that I become acquainted with His personal concepts which are often very different from my own. The way God communicates His personal concepts is not unlike the way my wife communicates her personal concepts. That is, in much the same way that my wife sets forth examples or instances which serve as denotations of her unique concepts, God does the same thing through the instances and examples that are set forth in Scripture.

It is even possible for God to express concepts for which our language does not have a word. But that should not be a surprise since human beings often do the same thing. Philosophers in particular often communicate new concepts by describing instances or examples of such concepts unique to them alone, and in doing so they are forced to use the existing language and its commonly held concepts. Perhaps eventually a particular signifier or word will be associated with that concept, but it is not essential to the initial communication of that concept. Eventually the word *agape* became a signifier for the unique concept of God's love that was being communicated with the instances of Scripture, but the word *agape* did not have such a meaning when the Bible was being written (Danaher 11-12). Indeed, God's unique concept of love did not exist for us prior to the Scriptural instances that created it. That is, the defining characteristics of love that are set forth in the thirteenth chapter of 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, or the numerous examples of God's love such as Hosea's love for Gomer, or the fact that we are told that God gave His Son to be tortured and killed because of love, all serve as denotations of a concept of love that is very different from any concept of love that we might have acquired from our language community. But it is very natural that such a concept is not compatible with our concept, since the concept of love which is being set forth in Scripture is not a common concept at all, but rather God's personal concept of love.

### Conclusion

The ancients and medievals, for the most part, imagined that concepts were God-given, or rather, God had equipped us with an ability to conceive the world correctly. But when we consider the instances that Scripture sets forth as extensions of a particular concept (as we see with the example of love), we often get a concept that is very different from the concept we commonly hold. That is because often the concepts that God wishes to communicate to us are His personal concepts, and personal concepts are very different from concepts formed either by our language communities or our scientific communities. The major difference between personal concepts and other concepts is the fact that personal concepts are not subject to changes in language and culture the way other concepts are. Of course our personal concepts may be influenced by such

changes but they are not dependent upon them simply because they are personal. Thus, the fact that the nature of language is ambiguous and unable to express precise and univocal meanings, does not prevent us from expressing personal concepts. Indeed, every postmodern writer who points out how ambiguous and unable language is to establish the kind of certainty and exactness that Enlightenment science had sought, is able, with that same language, to express their own personal concepts, and express them in deep and meaningful ways.

Today, postmodern trends should not present a challenge to Christians, since the ultimate purpose of language, especially regarding God and His communication with us, is not to express a single, univocal meaning. That is the perversion of Enlightenment thinking. The ultimate purpose of language is to provide signs and syntax from which a speaker can express their own unique concepts. The point of intimate communication is not to share words only for the sake of understanding the extension of a specific signifier, but to understand the personal signification that a speaker attributes to a specific signifier. This is the point of intimate communication, and just as Derrida's purpose is to get us to understand his personal concept of what he means by "*differance*" (Derrida 73-101), similarly, God's purpose is to have us understand His personal concept of what He means by "love." And just as it is possible for Derrida to express his personal concepts, it is also possible for God to express Himself in similar fashion.

The deconstructionists' claim that a multiplicity of meanings is possible from a given text is of course true, but no more so than the fact that I can make all sorts of meanings out of what my wife says, if that is my intention. But if I am intent upon understanding the meaning or personal concept my wife is attempting to express, I can do that as well, and thereby reach a greater intimacy with her. The same is of course true of God and His communication with us. If my intention is to make a multiplicity of meanings from His words, nothing within my own nature or the nature of language prevents me. But if my intention is to know God's personal concepts in order to enter into greater intimacy with Him, nothing within my own nature or the nature of language prevents that as well.

Of course, in order for us to understand God's personal concepts, we must come to Scripture with the intention of entering into an intimate communion with God by coming to know His personal concepts. To do so we must understand that neither our language community nor our scientific community have equipped us with concepts that enable us to understand what God is trying to communicate to us. If we come to Scripture believing that the concepts which our language community (or the concepts which an ancient biblical language community) provide are adequate, we will misunderstand the

Scripture as surely as we will misunderstand Derrida if we suppose that his concept of "differance" or "trace" corresponds to the concepts associated with such signifiers by our language community. With Scripture, God is putting forth His unique personal concepts as surely as Derrida is with his work. When reading a particularly unconventional philosopher, we very naturally understand that our conventional concepts will not allow us to understand what the author is attempting to express. Strangely we do not always apply this simple insight when reading Scripture.

### Postscript

Because of the nature of the human mind to freely form concepts, and the nature of culture and language to arbitrarily change, we cannot achieve the kind of objective and universal conceptual understanding of the world that we have pursued from the time of the ancients until our present century. But all that means is that that ambition was ill conceived and based upon an illusion about the way the world is conceptualized. The truth is that our conceptual understanding of the world is never objective, but always subjective. Of course, there is an objective, external world but it is always conceptualized subjectively. Equally, there is an intersubjective reality to the concepts of particular language communities. The conceptual reality the Christian seeks, however, is purely subjective in that it is a reality which exists not "out there" within nature or a language community, but within the noetic reality that is God's mind. Furthermore, we have access to at least a portion of that ultimate reality because God has chosen to reveal to us through Scripture some of His most important personal concepts.

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## Concepts and Our Understanding of Them

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## **Approaches to Genesis: A Review Article**

David W. Baker\*

Recent publications on the first book of the Bible give a useful overview of the various approaches which can elucidate a biblical text. This brief survey shows that publishers find a niche for things ranging between reprints of older classics and more popular thematic studies, coffee table books with illustrations and detailed scholarly investigations. All readers should find something of interest from the works reviewed here.

Herman Gunkel was a pioneer in the area of the form critical analysis of the Bible, most particularly Genesis and the Psalms. The Mercer Library of Biblical Studies has provided a useful translation from German of the third edition of his very important commentary, which originally appeared in 1901.<sup>1</sup> Placing Gunkel in his context, Ernest W. Nicholson provides a 7 page introduction.

The volume is important as a landmark in the history of interpretation of Scripture, especially exemplifying the critical perspective. This is noteworthy for the reader when seeing the division of the text, and comment upon it, into the sources proposed by the Documentary Hypothesis. Since Gunkel also has his own view on how the text is to be reordered, finding comment on any particular section can be a bit daunting, especially since there is scripture index for all the passages discussed apart from genesis itself. For example, the brief discussion of Gen 2:4a (attributed by Gunkel to the Priestly source) immediately precedes the discussion of 1:1-23, and follows the commentary on 'The Primeval History According to J', which itself covers 2:4b-3:24; 4:2-16; 4:1, 17-24; 4:25, 26, 5:29; 6:1-6; the J rendition of the Flood story (various verses and parts of verses between Gen 6-8); 9:18-27; the Table of Nations (9:18, 19, 10:1b, 8-19, 21, 25-30); and 11:1-9.

The book, while very dated, provides interesting and intriguing points of theology and exegesis which, even if one does not agree, deserve thought and interaction. His introduction, entitled 'The Legends of Genesis,' lays out his understanding of form criticism and how it applies to genesis. This includes a discussion of the various genres, the most important being 'legend,' as well as the history of their purported development and transmission.

If nothing else, the work is ingenious, but does raise questions as to its relation to a real, existent text. Even those who do not agree with the author's suggestions as to textual composition and structure must grapple with

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the real problems that do reside in the text and its interpretation. The book uses untransliterated Hebrew and Greek, so the lay person will find the going difficult. The book should be in all academic theological libraries, but pastors and teachers would probably not find it as a high priority for them.

A completely different audience and approach lies behind the UBS Handbook Series, which also just released a volume on Genesis.<sup>2</sup> The goal of the series is "to assist practicing Bible translators as they carry out the important task of putting God's Word into the many languages spoken in the world today." To do this they provide "valuable exegetical, historical, cultural, and linguistic information" (i). They thus have a much more practical than academic purpose. This is illustrated, for example by the inclusion of sections on translating *'adam* and the names of God, but none on hypotheses concerning composition and transmission of the text.

The layout of the commentary is to provide sections in both the Revised Standard version and Today's English Version. Then comment is provided, usually on every word or phrase of each verse. There are no foreign languages used, nor are there many references to secondary sources apart from other translations (and E. Speiser's Anchor Bible commentary volume), which is both boon and bane. Attention is drawn directly to the text, rather than what many others have said about it, so there is more immediacy to the commentary. A disadvantage is not knowing in every case whether the interpretation presented is generally accepted, unanimous, or idiosyncratic.

The volume will probably not be the sole source which readers will consult in studying the book, but it provides a good commentary in a succinct and readable form. All theological libraries need the volume, and many teachers and preachers will surely consult it often.

A completely different, visual approach to Genesis is taken by Ada Feyerick in what is described as "a pictorial panorama of the ancient Near East, its history, its culture, its people, and its impact on Genesis."<sup>3</sup> In the foreword, William G. Dever, a leading American archaeologist, briefly discusses the importance of archaeology for providing a context for the biblical stories. Cyrus Gordon and Nahum Sarna, both distinguished scholars of the ancient Near East and the Bible, provide 2-3 pages of introductory comment to each of the chapters, which are headed: "Mesopotamia: Land of Myths," "The Mists of Time: Genesis 1-11," "Canaan: Land Between Empires," "The Patriarchs: Genesis 12-36," "Egypt: The Nurturing Land," and "Joseph: Prelude to Nationhood: Genesis 37-50." Apparently Feyerick wrote the text which accompanies the illustrations within each chapter, though her role is not spelled out.

There is no textual commentary on Genesis, but many lavish photographs of sites, landscapes, artifacts and texts engagingly illustrate a



number of biblical passages. These are supplemented by maps, chronological timelines, and a family tree. The format and size suggest that the book is intended for coffee table and casual perusal, which is a valid entre into the biblical text, as long as one is aware that this is only a beginning. The volume will be useful for teachers looking for illustrative material, and would be well placed in church libraries. It is unfortunate that some of the photographs, especially of geographical locations, were not professionally done, since a number are somewhat blurred.

The last two works reviewed here are more detailed studies of different aspects of the book of Genesis. Desmond Alexander, formerly of The Queen's University, Belfast, goes beyond the strict parameters of this review in that he explores important theological themes through the entire Pentateuch.<sup>4</sup> His study is at an elementary level since he found that "first-year students of theology and religious studies have very limited understanding of the basic contents of the Pentateuch" (xiv). The same can be said for seminary students and parishioners, so the volume should have a wide appeal. To aid those with only rudimentary knowledge of the Pentateuch, Alexander provides simple maps of the ancient Near East in the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium, the Sinai wilderness and 2 suggested routes for the journey from Egypt to Canaan, and diagrams of the layout of the Israelite camp surrounding the Tabernacle, a schematic floor plan of the Tabernacle, and a cut-away diagram of it. The first chapter of the book also briefly surveys the content of the Pentateuch.

The themes or motifs which are presented follow a canonical order. They are shown as they are 'born' in the biblical text of the Pentateuch, and traced as they 'grow up' into the New Testament. The themes explored are: "the royal lineage in Genesis" which looks at the importance of family line, seed and genealogy; "paradise lost" and the importance of the motif of the earth/land from creation on; "the blessing of the nations" looks at blessing and curse beginning with Eden; "by faith Abraham" and the seminal covenant with him and his descendants. Exodus introduces "who is Lord?" looking at the name and nature of the covenant God of Sinai, "the Passover" as redemption and ritual, "the covenant at Sinai," and "the Tabernacle." Leviticus allows the study of holiness, sacrifice and food regulations. Numbers explores the people's murmurings, while Deuteronomy leads to study of "love and loyalty" where God's love is set in a covenantal or treaty context, and election.

As can be seen by the number of motifs which are covered in such a short space, they all are only superficial, but that fits the scope, and need, of the volume. This volume also deserves a place on church library shelves and would well serve for an adult Bible study class.

Finally we will look at a massive technical analysis of the "Blessing of Jacob" (Gen 49).<sup>5</sup> The author, Raymond de Hoop, a Dutch scholar, has

worked on this passage for a decade and shares here the fruits of his study. This theologically significant chapter is fraught with textual, translational, historical and interpretational issues which the author addresses. Verse 10, which speaks of a sceptre and Shiloh illustrate some of the difficulties, as does J. Astruc using the chapter as an example of isolating two separate sources because of differences in the use of the divine names.

In the first chapter, "Status quaestionis," de Hoop points out translational problems with no less than 22 words and phrases from the chapter. He presents the views of 6 scholars regarding the chapter's origin, which is related to identification of its genre (5 additional scholars) and provenance (most viewing it to be old- 1400-1000 BC). Following a useful recapitulation of the questions involved, the author lists 6 desiderata (correct translation, structural analysis, genre analysis in light of ancient Near Eastern literature, a synchronic analysis seeking ideological purpose, a diachronic analysis seeking to determine the growth of the tradition, and an analysis of the chapter against the background of Israelite history).

Chapter 2 addresses text, translation and structure. The fact that we are dealing with Hebrew poetry, which itself is only very inadequately understood, exacerbates the difficulties. Here he painstakingly examines each word, verbal form and strophe. The analysis itself is very technical and necessitates a good measure of Hebrew sophistication, though this does not hold for the entire book, which non-Hebrew readers will be able to follow with perseverance. This chapter, like all of the book, is very heavily footnoted with supporting secondary literature. De Hoop takes 'Shiloh' in v. 10 to be 'tribute...to him,' based on Ugaritic and following a proposal made by W. L. Moran. This analysis covers 167 pages. In chapter 3, the author suggests the genre of the chapter to be a collection of 'testamentary sayings' similar to those legitimizing royalty. He also finds it necessary (chapter 4) to look at the passage in its larger context of 47:29-49:33, which he calls 'the Deathbed Episode.' He looks at this passage synchronically, how it fits into the present Genesis as a whole and its own content and structure.

Previous study on the chapter is recounted and evaluated in chapter 5, and a diachronic study follows in chapter 6. Here de Hoop concludes that there are two layers or textual tendencies which are an earlier 'pro-Joseph' and a current 'pro-Judah,' though the chapter should be read as a unit with its context. He finds the final purpose of the section is to legitimize the rise of Judah, a younger brother, to a position superior to that of his older siblings. He holds that the 'pro-Joseph' version had a northern, Israelite origin around Shechem, dating from about 1250 BC, and the final version from about the time of Solomon, much earlier than much critical scholarship has recently placed any of Genesis, or the Pentateuch as whole, for that matter.

While there are elements of the analysis and interpretation with which scholars from across the spectrum will disagree, the work is a model of method and presentation, starting with the text itself on its own terms and thoroughly analyzing it before seeing how others have understood it. The book is also a model of clarity, being very 'user-friendly' with frequent summaries of what has been discussed and the conclusions reached. All Genesis scholars will need to consult the work, which will, unfortunately, be restricted mainly to libraries due to its unconscionable price.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Herman Gunkel, *Genesis*, transl. Mark E. Biddle (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997). lxxxviii + 478 pp., cloth, \$60.00.

<sup>2</sup> William D. Reayburn and Eun McG. Fry, *A Handbook on Genesis* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1997). x + 1149 pp., paper, \$37.99.

<sup>3</sup> Ada Feyerick, with Cyrus H. Gordon and Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis: World of Myths and Patriarchs* (New York: New York University Press, 1996). 256 pp. Cloth, \$60.00. Quote is from the back dust jacket.

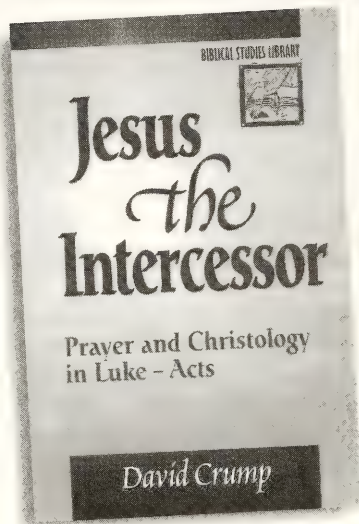
<sup>4</sup> T. Desmond Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Main Themes of the Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998). xxv + 228 pp., paper, \$14.99.

<sup>5</sup> Raymond de Hoop, *Genesis 49 in its Literary and Historical Context*, OTS 29 (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 1999). xvi + 695 pp., cloth, \$200.00.



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**David W. Baker, Elaine A. Heath with Morven Baker., *More Light on the Path: Daily Scripture Readings in Hebrew and Greek*. Grand Rapids, Mi.: Baker Books, 1998.**

Beginning students in biblical languages are often surprised to discover the richness of meaning communicated by scripture texts in their original tongues. Although many fine English translations are available, none can fully reproduce the artistry of Isaiah's rhetoric or the intricate nuances of Paul's labyrinthine Greek. Sadly, however, many find it difficult to sustain language study amidst the demands of ministry. And for those who succeed in doing so, the constant need to refer to grammars and lexicons usually makes reading scripture in the original languages more a labor of the mind than a feast for the soul.

*More Light On the Path* is thus a welcome resource, for it invites its reader to develop facility in biblical languages within the context of devotional reflection on scripture. The book comprises a series of daily readings, each of which consists of three texts: a brief prayer or meditation followed by short readings from the Greek New Testament and the Hebrew Bible. The scripture readings are accompanied by notes which offer morphological analyses of difficult forms and definitions of uncommon words, allowing the reader to grasp quickly the sense of the readings without recourse to other sources. The texts are united by a title which suggests interrelationships between them, and the daily units are joined with others into weekly units grouped by subjects that draw from biblical themes and liturgical calendars (e.g. hope, prayer, suffering, worship, Advent, Easter, Simhat Torah). An explanatory preface and list of abbreviations, as well as a calendar of weekly readings and scripture and subject indexes, facilitate the book's ease of use as a devotional guide.

Although the daily readings are sure to enhance one's competence in the biblical languages, the deeper value of the book, in this reader's opinion, is to be found in its capacity to stimulate meditation and prayer. Since the readings are brief, the technical aspects of grammar and terminology can be worked through quickly, allowing the reader time to read each text again and again. Pondering a text repeatedly in the original language unlocks new meanings and spiritual truths, and these are deepened as reflection is extended to the related scripture passage and the meditation. Each day's readings thus prompt the *contemplation* of scripture, a discipline too seldom practiced in a fast-paced society.

Under the daily pressure of busy schedules, even devotional time can become task-driven and perfunctory. *More Light on the Path* allows a prayerful digestion of scripture which nourishes both mind and soul. Those looking for a new and vital devotional experience will find a refreshing answer in this book. L. Daniel Hawk

**John Van Seters, *Prologue to History: The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis*, Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 367 pp., 1992.**

Since his important book published in 1975 (*Abraham in History and Tradition*, Yale University Press), John Van Seters has been part of a revolution in Pentateuchal studies, redefining the way many scholars understand the role of the Yahwist (author of

J in Wellhausen's older formulations). Most who work in the framework of the classical documentary hypothesis assume J was written in the ninth century BC by a historian of the southern kingdom, Judah. But Van Seters has argued that the Yahwist was a historian who worked in the period of the exile. In his earlier books, Van Seters has emphasized parallels with Greek history. Here he considers the significance of both Mesopotamian and Greek traditions from the first millennium BC as evidence for the exilic date for the Yahwist.

In his earlier work, Van Seters limited himself primarily to the Abrahamic narrative. This book extends his analysis to Genesis as a whole, applying his methods to the Primeval History, Jacob traditions, and the Joseph story. He continues to argue that the whole book has pre-J materials that were taken up and expanded by J, and further supplemented later by a priestly writer (P). Primarily however, and this is the fundamental contribution of his work, he concludes that the Yahwist was written as a "prologue" in form and function to the Deuteronomistic history (Deuteronomy-2 Kings). He considers Genesis and Exodus-Numbers the two major parts of the Yahwist's work.

Van Seters complains that since the days of H. Gunkel, Genesis has been identified as a composite of myth and legend, which has precluded subsequent scholars from regarding and treating J as a work of history. On the assumption that the Yahwist was first and foremost a historian, this volume compares Genesis with works of ancient historiography from Greece and Mesopotamia. Van Seters addresses the roles of myth, legend, and etiology in the various forms of ancient historiography. He concludes that Genesis presents us with "a type of antiquarian historiography concerned with origins and a national tradition of people and place" (page 22).

As always, Van Seters has written a book that is provocative and stimulating. His work has contributed to the current state of Pentateuchal studies, which is not unlike the political reality during the judges period; everyone is doing what is right in their own eyes (Judges 17:6; 18:1; 21:25).

There is much that we could criticize in the author's methods. But I will limit myself to two simple observations. First, Van Seters continues to insist that "Israel shares much more with Greece than it does with Mesopotamia and Egypt" (page 42). Such a position is hard to defend in light of ethnic, linguistic and socio-political historical realities. Despite the author's protestations to the contrary, the ancients were more inclined to recognize the sociological continuity of the various people groups of Western Asia. By this I mean that Egypt, Syria-Palestine, and Mesopotamia were considered contiguous political identities throughout most of ancient history prior to the Persian period. Unfortunately, Van Seters's books tend to perpetuate the old mistakes of failing to appreciate Israel's role in its ancient Near Eastern context.

My second main objection is the way the author uses the Mesopotamian materials selectively. At those points when he acknowledges what is surely undeniable Mesopotamian parallels with Genesis, he restricts the connections to later sources, denying that the Yahwist had access to anything besides Neo-Babylonian and Neo-Assyrian material. But the problem is the process of literary influence. Van Seters attempts to locate the Yahwist in the exilic period and therefore claims the ancient historian had easy access to the leading texts of Mesopotamia during the Persian period. But the mechanics of such literary borrowing remain problematic. Very recent studies have explored instead a second millennium Amorite connection between early Israel and



certain Mesopotamian traditions (especially legal traditions). Such explanations are more promising, and might eventually show Van Seters's approach is untenable.

Bill T. Arnold, Asbury Theological Seminary

**Gordon J. Wenham, *Numbers, Old Testament Guides*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997, 130 pp.**

**Iain W. Provan. *1 & 2 Kings, Old Testament Guides*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997, 125 pp.**

The publication of the above volumes completes *Old Testament Guides*, a series of concise handbooks written by members of the Society for Old Testament Study (U.K.) and designed for student use. Each of the volumes includes an introduction to the content of the book, a survey and assessment of critical issues and recent scholarship, cross-references to relevant works in the discipline, annotated bibliographies, and an attention to theological perspectives. The series has distinguished itself for its uniformly high quality and clarity and therefore constitutes an important resource for student, pastor, and scholar alike.

Those familiar with Gordon Wenham's fine commentary on *Numbers* (TOTC) will recognize in this introduction the lucid exposition and judicious discussion of critical issues that characterize the former work. Wenham excels in synthesizing a vast body of scholarship and presenting the key issues in a succinct manner that focuses the reader's attention squarely upon the text. His survey of *Numbers* consists of six chapters. The first explores the difficult question of the book's structure and the arrangement of its contents, beginning with a discussion of the issue before elaborating the views of Olson, Douglas, Milgrom, as well as his own. The second engages the equally difficult task of identifying and explaining the diverse genres which comprise *Numbers* (e.g. census lists, purity rules, dedication records, travel notes, complaints, cultic calendars). A third chapter offers a thorough yet concise account of the fragmentary and documentary hypotheses as these pertain to the book's composition and concludes with a discussion of holistic readings, attempts to combine synchronic and diachronic approaches (with particular attention on the work of J. de Vaulx), and contemporary diachronic analyses. The relationship between *Numbers* and history is explored in the fourth chapter. After a discussion of scholars who see the book as a response to issues faced in *Jehud* in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century B.C. (J. Gray, M. Douglas), Wenham presents extrabiblical (archaeological discoveries, ancient Near Eastern parallels) and biblical (e.g. outlook, terminology) evidence for the antiquity of the book's contents. The fifth chapter addresses the theology of *Numbers*, classified in terms of thematic or kerygmatic approaches. The volume concludes with a valuable discussion of the interpretation of *Numbers* in later biblical and extrabiblical literature.

Iain Provan's volume on *1 & 2 Kings* also comprises six chapters and begins with an excellent introduction which orients the reader to the historiographical, narrative, and didactic features of the books. The next chapter examines *Kings* as narrative literature. Provan begins with a discussion of the complicated questions of authorship, editing, and composition and, after noting that "traditional" critical scholarship has rarely read *Kings* as a coherent narrative, reviews the contributions of newer narrative approaches (illustrating the value of these by applying them to three difficult texts). The third

chapter considers the issues of history and historiography, prefacing the review of issues with a short but insightful reflection on the nature of historiography. A related issue, the contention that the writers of Kings have distorted reality when presenting Israelite religion, constitutes the focus of the fourth chapter. Provan reviews the issue in detail and cogently points out that much of the tension derives from a scholarly community that has developed its own views about the religion of Israel (and religious life in general). The fifth chapter elaborates larger themes in Kings (the God of Israel, true worship, a moral universe, and divine promise) and explores the extent to which the books are configured by a Deuteronomistic perspective. The final chapter places Kings in its canonical context and continues the discussion of the essential role of perspective in the book's canonization and later interpretation.

Both of these fine volumes succeed as "guides" on a number of levels. First, they engage relevant scholarship and offer judicious assessments of the contributions of various scholars and approaches. For those who wish to read more, the authors provide select bibliographies at the end of each chapter, often (though not always) with annotations. On another level, they provide overviews which enable the introductory reader to gain a sense of each book as a whole. Finally, they engage their readers in the task of interpretation itself by pointing to specific issues raised by the biblical text and presenting ways of addressing them. For those wanting to engage in deeper study of Numbers and Kings, these volumes offer a good place to begin. L. Daniel Hawk

**J. Cheryl Exum (ed.), *The Historical Books: A Sheffield Reader*, The Biblical Seminar 40, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997, 383 pp.**

This latest volume in the Sheffield Reader series collects twenty of the best articles on the Historical Books published in the *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* between the years 1976 and 1996. These are grouped into three divisions—1) Joshua, Judges, Ruth; 2) Samuel, Kings; and 3) Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah—with half the essays dealing with Samuel and Kings. The entries illustrate a wide range of methodological approaches, with particular emphasis on literary and social-scientific studies.

Keith Whitelam's important article ("The Identity of Early Israel: The Realignment and Transformation of Late Bronze-Iron Age Palestine") opens the volume with a radical challenge to approaches which place too much reliance on the biblical text to explain the complex transformation and realignment of Late Bronze-Iron Age Palestine. George Coats ("The Book of Joshua: Heroic Saga or Conquest Theme?") appropriates a form-critical approach to argue that the story of Joshua, like the story of Moses, is cast in the form of a heroic saga, suggesting stronger connections to the Pentateuch than to Judges. Lori Rowlett ("Inclusion, Exclusion and Marginality in the Book of Joshua") adopts an ideological approach which views Joshua as an instrument of power which defines inclusion in terms of willingness to submit to the voluntary power structure represented by Joshua. W. J. Dumbrell ("‘In Those Days There Was No King in Israel; Every Man Did What Was Right in His Own Eyes’: The Purpose of the Book of Judges Reconsidered") asserts that Judges illustrates YHWH's commitment to Israel despite the latter's repeated intransigence, thus giving hope to the exiles who had

seen the monarchy fall. Jon L. Berquist's essay ("Role Dedifferentiation in the Book of Ruth") concludes the first section with an exploration of the ways in which role reversals in the book deconstruct social roles.

The second section begins with an essay by Frank Anthony Spina ("Eli's Seat: The Transition from Priest to Prophet in 1 Samuel 1-4"), which employs a close reading to demonstrate that Eli's "falling from the seat" intimates the deposition of one form of leader (priest) and its replacement by another (prophet). Lyle Eslinger ("Viewpoints and Point of View in 1 Samuel 8-12") challenges the historical-critical tendency to neglect the narratorial perspective which stands behind the story and serves as guide through the textual complexities. Thomas R. Preston ("The Heroism of Saul: Patterns of Meaning in the Narrative of the Early Kingship") sees a common pattern in the stories of Samuel, Saul, and David ("rise of the lowly, fall of the mighty") which elevates Saul as a heroic king in contrast to David. James W. Flanagan ("Chiefs in Israel") applies sociological models on the rise and character of chiefdoms to elucidate the transitional period of the reign of Saul and the early years of David. Leo G. Perdue ("Is There Anyone Left of the House of Saul . . .?": Ambiguity and the Characterization of David in the Succession Narrative") describes the manner by which the Succession Narrative constructs an ambivalent portrait of David (both compassionate and ruthless). Hans J.L. Jensen draws on the work of René Girard to elaborate the thematic interaction of mimetism, desire, rivalry, and violence that configures the Succession Narrative.

The essays on Kings focus mainly on Solomon. Hugh S. Pyper ("Judging the Wisdom of Solomon: The Two-Way Effect of Intertextuality") reads the story of the cannibal mothers (2 Kings 6) against the story of the two prostitutes and Solomon (1 Kings 3), revealing the glory and shame of human nature and the failure of the monarchy. Stuart Lasine ("The Ups and Downs of Monarchical Justice: Solomon and Jehoram in an Intertextual World") offers an excellent discussion of the concept of intertextuality and narrative analogy in response to Pyper's essay. K.I. Parker ("Solomon as Philosopher King?: The Nexus of Law and Wisdom in 1 Kings 1-11") argues that the story of Solomon, both positively and negatively, illustrates that Wisdom must be bound to Torah. Richard Coggins ("On Kings and Disguises") explores stories which share the common motif of disguise, by or in the presence of the king.

An essay by Sara Japhet ("The Historical Reliability of Chronicles: The History of the Problem and its Place in Biblical Research") opens the last section with a thorough overview of scholarship on the topic. Donald F. Murray ("Dynasty, People, and the Future: The Message of Chronicles") considers three key passages and concludes that the books of Chronicles do not look to the restoration of the Davidic monarchy but to a future open to new possibilities through temple and worship. David Kraemer ("On the Relationship of the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah") appropriates literary methods to argue that Ezra and Nehemiah constitute two distinct works with divergent ideologies. Kenneth D. Tollefson and H.G.M. Williamson ("Nehemiah as Cultural Revitalization: An Anthropological Perspective") define and apply a model of cultural revitalization to the Nehemiah material, concluding that the general sequence of events follows the model and reflecting on implications for issues of composition and history. Tamara C. Eskenazi ("Out from the Shadows: Biblical Women in the Post-exilic Era") draws on biblical texts and the Elephantine documents to make the women of this period more visible.



The articles offer a superb cross-section of contemporary approaches and issues, and all make stimulating reading. The collection will therefore be of particular value to those who are looking for a way into contemporary scholarship on the Historical Books or who enjoy being challenged by new perspectives and insights. L. Daniel Hawk

**Richard D. Nelson, *Joshua*, Old Testament Library, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1997, hb., 309 pp.**

Richard D. Nelson's commentary on Joshua is the latest volume in the highly esteemed Old Testament Library series. The commentary proper is preceded by a select bibliography of commentaries and special studies related to the book of Joshua (pp. xiii-xviii). Thereafter Nelson launches into the usual study of introductory matters, discussing issues like the historical significance of the book of Joshua, the genesis of the biblical book, its genre and literary style, key theological themes, and the book's portrayal of the figure of Joshua (pp. 1-24). Following the pattern of most volumes in this series, after the introduction the author provides separate treatment of each literary unit in the book. For each unit Nelson offers his own fresh translation of the Hebrew original (often with a parallel translation of the Greek variant), extensive textual notes, synthetic comments on the style and intention of the unit, and finally paragraph by paragraph commentary. At the back Nelson provides a helpful Appendix listing modern site identifications of places named in Joshua (pp. 285-89), an index of biblical references and other ancient sources, and an index of subjects. The reader misses an index of secondary authors cited in the book.

Like most critical scholars today, Nelson views Joshua as one portion of the larger literary complex encompassing Deuteronomy to 2 Kings, commonly known as the Deuteronomistic History (DH). Nelson attempts to reconstruct the evolution of this book by exploiting apparent tensions in the text. He grants that some of the stories (like Rahab) existed independently earlier, but these were incorporated into the Deuteronomistic work in the late seventh century B.C. Convinced that some portions of the book presuppose the exile, Nelson proposes a second redaction of the book during the exile.

Operating from a radical hermeneutic or suspicion, Nelson finds the book of Joshua to be virtually worthless as a source for understanding the late second millennium B.C. events and times it purports to describe. In his own words, "Joshua's true historical value consists in what it reveals about the social and ideological world of those who told these stories, collected and redacted them, and then read the resulting literary product. Joshua is a historical witness to what later generations believed had happened to their ancestors." (p. 4). It matters not a whit to Nelson whether or not the Israelites were deluded in their beliefs. Influenced by N. K. Gottwald, he rejects the notion of an ethnically distinct Israel taking over the land of Canaan. Rather, the people who came to call themselves "Israel" represented "elements of the indigenous population of Palestine attracted to new economic opportunities in the highlands and/or disaffected by life dominated by the economic and political opportunities in the highlands and/or disaffected by life dominated by the economic and political power of the Canaanite city-states" (p. 4). According to Nelson the toponym and boundary lists in chapters 13-21

represent "literary exercises in cognitive mapping, performed for social and ideological purposes," which, like the conquest stories in the preceding chapters "strengthened national identity and assured Israel's secure possession of its ancestral lands" (p. 12). The literary figure of Joshua "serves as a forerunner for the ideological role played by later kings, and especially for the expansionistic and reforming policies of Josiah" (p. 22).

In a commentary of almost 300 pages Nelson offers many insightful exegetical insights, particularly on literary features of the text. While some will question his high view of the Old Greek textual tradition, his juxtaposing of translations of the Masoretic text and Old Greek variants is very helpful. However, with the minimalist perspective adopted by Nelson, too much time is spent speculating about the evolution of a particular text and not enough on answering the questions which most readers of the book of Joshua actually ask. But some will recognize a certain irony in this commentary, which encourages them to interpret it with the same hermeneutic of suspicion with which he approaches the book of Joshua. For, having read through the volume, one wonders if its value does not lie more in what it reveals about the social and ideological world of those who comment on biblical books than in the meaning and message intended by the authors of biblical books. Alongside this volume a student of the book of Joshua should read the commentary by Richard Hess (*Joshua: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC [Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996], which appeared one year earlier and offers a much more positive view of the book's historical significance.

Daniel I. Block, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

**Barnabas Lindars, S.S.F. *Judges 1-5: A New Translation and Commentary*, A. D. H. Mayes, ed., Edinburgh: T&T Clark, Ltd, 1995, 302 pp.**

At the time of his death in 1991, Lindars was preparing a new volume on Judges for the International Critical Commentary. The volume under review represents his work on the first five chapters of the book, with minor editorial modifications and a brief introduction by A. D. H. Mayes. To use the word "encyclopedic" with reference to the commentary would not be an exaggeration. Lindars works through these chapters with a meticulous attention to detail and offers informed and thorough discussions of every feature of the text. Following the focus of the ICC, his comments are heavily weighted towards conventional historical-critical concerns. Each section opens with an analysis of sources and redaction before moving to an elaboration of the respective verses, with attention to the grammar and vocabulary of the text.

The commentary makes its most valuable contributions when addressing historical, geographical, lexical, and text-critical issues. Most distinctive is the attention given to comparisons of the Septuagintal and Masoretic versions of the book, both of which Lindars regards as authentic witnesses to the original text. The depth of discussion on these issues is well beyond what one may find in any other commentary. (The section on Judges 1 takes up 85 pages!).

Lindars is skeptical of the historical reliability of much of the material in the book. He follows mainline scholarship in viewing Judges 1 as a "pastiche" of materials drawn from various sources and brought together at a late date. While the stories of the judges

themselves probably constitute older material, he nonetheless believes that the sequence in which they are told is a creation of the redactor, who is also responsible for fabricating transitional material. From this perspective, Lindars holds the opinion that "the historical value of the Prelude" (Judges 1) "is slight," (p. 7), while the story of Othniel displays a "patently artificial character" (p. 129 ).

Lindars' exposition is marked by clarity and precision, but it presumes a well-informed reader willing to follow complex arguments on composition, transmission, and history. The commentary will therefore be most welcome in an academic setting and may not serve as well the interests of those seeking a ready homiletical or theological resource.

L. Daniel Hawk

**Kirsten Nielsen, *Ruth*, The Old Testament Library, trans. Edward Broadbridge. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997, 99 pp. \$16.99.**

Recently, the book of *Ruth* has become quite a fashionable focus of female scholarship. Interestingly, however, in all the scholarly material around, this is the only commentary of *Ruth* written by a woman. Besides simply affirming that *Ruth* is a good story, Nielsen has two basic purposes in this delightfully concise and succinct commentary. First of all she interprets the book of *Ruth* in intertextual relation with the matriarchal sagas and secondly, she accepts the inevitable reality that the book of *Ruth* is a political statement in defense of the Davidic monarchy and its claims to the kingship. Thus, for Nielsen, the focus of the book of *Ruth* is the genealogy.

In a protracted introduction, the real focus of the commentary, Nielsen elaborates her methodology. She is concerned to examine the text of *Ruth* closely in order to ascertain its structures - the various ways in which the book can be outlined, the repetition of key concepts, the retelling of events, the way in which conclusions become, or serve as, beginnings. It is through these structures that she can later compare *Ruth* and the matriarchal stories. She delights in the resonances between the *Ruth* text and the Joseph and Jonah narratives as she explores the genre of *Ruth*, suggesting a possible intertextuality there. Nevertheless her main intention is to explore the text as it connects with the matriarchal stories.

Drawing upon postmodern trends in textual analysis, Nielsen first premises that language does not have a fixed meaning, but is multiple in meaning, changing as individual experience changes the reader. This makes demands of the reader, whose interpretation of any text is ongoing and continuous, influenced by the many contexts in which reading takes place, the variety of reading experience, indeed one's reading history. These all provide an intertextuality for interpretation. From her perspective, this is Nielsen's reading of the text, and because of that the reader is engaged in a lively and vigorous dialogue with Nielsen. Furthermore, Nielsen has read extensively. Her bibliography reveals her engagement with other scholarship.

Then, Nielsen offers likely, possible and reasonable interpretations based on the network of texts which gave rise to the book. The text of *Ruth* itself points to intertextualities. Thus, when the writer of *Ruth* makes specific reference to the matriarchs Leah and Rachel and Tamar, then the writer is inviting the reader to explore *Ruth* in relation to those texts. As a story of barrenness being overcome by divine



intervention, *Ruth* can be read alongside the stories of Rebekah and Sarah. Nielsen reads *Ruth* with the stories of the matriarchs, because Ruth is a matriarch!

Nielsen acknowledges the problems with the genealogy which concludes *Ruth*. For some scholars the genealogy is considered an addition, suggesting that the Davidic dynasty appropriated this congenial story to support the monarchy's diplomatic/political alliances. For Nielsen, the genealogy is integral to the story and, more than likely, the reason why *Ruth* the book was written! If, as Nielsen argues, Ruth is a variation of the matriarchal narratives, then the writer's aim would be to connect David via Ruth and Boaz to the early history of Israel, thereby defending David's claim to the throne and suggesting that David is a new patriarch, or even the ultimate patriarch, chosen by God. Thus, the genealogy becomes a conclusion to the period of the story of Ruth and marks a beginning to the saga of the monarchs.

This discussion of the genealogy in relation to the story of *Ruth* is fascinating. Nielsen examines the ideological manipulations of these family histories within a historical and literary framework, suggesting that the election of Ruth as David's ancestress may point to the division of the kingdom as a possible date of writing. Again, Nielsen points to possibilities and doesn't make assertions.

Nielsen admits the canonical problem with *Ruth*. The LXX places *Ruth* between Judges and Samuel; the BHS has *Ruth* among the writings and associated with specific religious festivals. How this influences reading is of course an issue, particularly for reader-response critics, canonical criticism and within socio-cultural studies, but Nielsen's interest is intertextual criticism here.

Despite being short, this commentary is richly packed, offering an invitation to the student to explore the text from a variety of perspectives. The value of Nielsen's approach is that she invites dialogue, points to possible intertextualities, and challenges the student to re-read the text from her perspective of intertextual relations. She encourages the student to explore the meanings available in the text, to make conscious connections between texts and to discover the continuity that exists in biblical writing. It is, therefore, a commentary which fulfills Nielsen's personal aims yet provides only a small detail of *Ruth*.

Dorothy Penny-Larter

**Paul R. House, *1, 2 Kings*, The New American Commentary, Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995, 432 pp.**

**Jerome T. Walsh, *1 Kings*, Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative & Poetry, Collegeville, Minn: Michael Glazier, 1996, xxi + 393 pp.**

Since the books of Kings constitute primary source material for reconstructing the history of Israel, the study of these books has been devoted mainly to addressing the difficult historical problems they raise. Commentaries on 1-2 Kings generally follow this focus and concentrate on reconciling the books' internal chronologies, setting biblical events within the framework of ancient Near Eastern history, delineating sources and forms, assessing the historicity of the contents (especially the so-called prophetic narratives), and accounting for the composition of the books. The two commentaries reviewed here take different stances and focus on the canonical form of the texts and the message rendered by the author/narrator. They therefore represent a welcome addition

to the commentary literature on these often-overlooked books.

The New American Commentary series offers commentary based on the NIV translation of the Bible and addresses a wide readership: scholars, pastors, and laypeople. Its aim is to provide concise, readable commentary from an "unapologetically confessional" perspective that holds to the inerrancy of scripture and values the theological integrity of the biblical text.

Paul House's commentary on 1-2 Kings follows this agenda closely and is marked by solid exposition of the biblical text and a user-friendly format. The commentary begins with a preface that summarizes the components of his integrated approach (historical details, literary details, canonical details, theological details, and applicational details) and explains their interrelationships. A lengthy introduction then elaborates each of these components. The discussion of historical details begins with a cogent and comprehensive summary of views on the authorship and composition of the book. (House holds the view that the books were composed by a single author, influenced by Deuteronomy, as parts of a larger work.) The next section deals with the troublesome issue of chronology and offers a less substantial overview of scholarship; House gives a brief overview of the problem before endorsing the conclusions of Thiele and does not offer an analysis beyond an assertion that the difficulties can be explained. Subsequent sections offer an overview of the political situation, as well as excellent arguments for the primacy of the Masoretic text over the Septuagint and the historicity of the so-called prophetic "legends."

The second main section offers an introduction to literary issues (by which House seems to mean attention to the poetics of the text) which follows the lines of conventional formalism (structure, plot, character, point of view). A brief discussion of canonical criticism and the canonical placement and function of 1-2 Kings follows, and this in turn gives way to an identification of key theological issues: monotheism vs. idolatry, central worship vs. the high places, covenant loyalty vs. spiritual rebellion, true prophecy vs. "lying spirits," God's covenant with David vs. dynastic disintegration, and God's sovereignty vs. human pride. The introduction concludes with principles which guide the pastor and teacher in the task of applying the texts.

Commentary on the text itself follows an accessible format. Each main section begins with an outline, followed by a summary of historical context and specific issues raised by the text. The commentary then works through the section passage by passage, beginning first with a quotation of the biblical text (in boldface) and proceeding to an exposition of the passage. At the conclusion of each section House offers theological and canonical reflections on key aspects of the text and concludes with their "applicational implications." The preacher and teacher will especially appreciate these latter sections, which provide solid and balanced reflection for preaching, teaching, and personal study.

Given the scope and format of the project, there are inevitable trade-offs. Whether for the sake of brevity or of remaining within confessional parameters, some particularly thorny issues receive only a cursory treatment. On the difficult issues of chronology, House is often content to rest on previous scholarship without engaging opposing perspectives. The chronology of Hezekiah's reign is a case in point. The regnal dates for Hezekiah seem to conflict with those of his Northern contemporaries and with Assyrian annals. Furthermore, the account of his reign seems to contain two accounts

of an invasion by Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:13-18; 18:14-19:37), one resulting in the payment of tribute and the other in the destruction of the Assyrian army. This leads to the question of whether the Bible recounts one long campaign, conflates two versions of one campaign, or recounts two separate campaigns. House acknowledges that scholars debate the sequence of events and then briefly states his own position (one long campaign), with a footnote to two supporting sources. Since the commentary affirms the inerrancy of scripture and the vital importance of discerning historical details, it is somewhat disappointing that it does not engage this debate and others (e.g. the identities of Ben-Hadad and the "anonymous" king of the Elisha narratives) more substantively.

These minor misgivings are more of a concern to scholars than they will be to the pastors and laypeople toward whom this book is oriented. These readers will find the commentary to be an excellent and usable resource for the study of 1-2 Kings. The exposition of texts is lucid, straightforward, and well-informed, allowing the reader to benefit by a theologically-sensitive explanation of the text, unencumbered by digressions or discussions of academic fine points. The summaries of history and theology present the essential points necessary for understanding the exposition, and discussions of application draw connections to the concerns of the contemporary church. The commentary will therefore make a fine addition to church libraries and to the personal libraries of those who preach and teach.

Jerome Walsh's commentary on 1 Kings takes a completely different tack. Employing narrative criticism in the service of a close reading of the text, Walsh focuses specifically on the literary dimensions of the book; that is, how the biblical narrator shapes the story of Israel's kings and prophets. The volume is the first in a new series which focuses on the literary character of the biblical texts in their final form. Contributors represent a variety of backgrounds and approaches, but all are united by the desire to explore the literary artistry of scripture.

Walsh's reading reveals a narrative of extraordinary sophistication and power. The commentary is divided into four main parts which elaborate the stories of Solomon (1 Kings 1-11), Jeroboam (1 Kings 11:26-14:20), Elijah (1 Kings 17-19), and Ahab (1 Kings 20:1-22:40). Each part contains a series of chapters which work through the narrative blocks in sequence before concluding with a chapter that provides an overview of the whole story. The chapters typically break down these blocks into smaller sections and comprise an exposition of the text followed by discussions of such elements as characterization and narrative effect. The format is rather fluid, and while this causes some confusion at points, it ultimately works to the reader's benefit by allowing the exposition to follow the flow of the narrative itself.

Walsh not only gives the reader a deeper sense of the stories themselves but also of the way that the narrator shapes the presentation of the events. He helps the reader appreciate the narrator's artistry through the identification and explanation of various structural symmetries (e.g. chiasm, parallelism, inclusion) and discussions of the how the biblical narrator presents the characters of the story. Throughout the commentary, he uncovers the subtle craft of the biblical storyteller through meticulous attention to the language of the text (as when, in the story of the two prostitutes before Solomon, the true mother calls her child a *yālūd*, a presumably more intimate term than the more common *yeled*). Each chapter of exposition is filled with discoveries and insights, while the summary chapters offer suggest larger connections. (Especially provocative are the



allusions between Elijah and Moses which link the two great figures but intimate that Elijah does fails to meet the standards Moses set.) Best of all, he writes in an engaging style that is provocative enough to satisfy the scholar but simple enough to engage the reader with little knowledge of Hebrew.

This is a new kind of commentary, one that shapes its exposition to the genre itself. While other commentaries atomize and compartmentalize the narrative, Walsh is content to let the story tell itself, serving as the reader's guide into the strange and marvelous world that it presents. Moving away from dry exposition, he displays the storyteller's flair and thus draws the reader into the intricate interplay of events and characters. In so doing, he releases the narrative's power to work on its reader. And that, ultimately, is what a commentary on 1 Kings should do. L. Daniel Hawk

**Nancy L. deClaissé-Walford, *Reading from the Beginning: The Shaping of the Hebrew Psalter* Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997. 122 pages.**

In *Reading from the Beginning: The Shaping of the Hebrew Psalter*, Nancy deClaissé-Walford examines the Psalter from the standpoint of the entire book being a literary unity. She first explains her understanding and use of the canonical method, demonstrating that her basis is James Sanders's method of "canonical criticism." In chapters two, three, and four, she presents a history of the canon, a history of the shaping community (the believers who formed the canon through their recognition and use of Scriptures), and a brief history of the process by which the Psalter attained its final shape. In the following six chapters, she analyzes the five "books" of the Psalter with an excursus on the importance of kingship in the ancient Near East. Chapters eleven and twelve conclude her study in which she proposes that the canon was the means by which the canonical (believing) community survived as an identifiable entity in a world in which multiple ethnic groups and cultures were absorbed into Greek and Roman culture.

DeClaissé-Walford presents a strong case for her argument that Yahweh's Torah and the Kingship of Yahweh are the overarching themes of the Book of Psalms. They are interwoven throughout the Psalter and serve to tie the various collections and the five "books" together. The five books tell the tale of Israel for the Jews of the postexilic period. Books I and II present the golden age of Israel under David and Solomon, while the themes of Book III are the destruction of the northern and southern kingdoms and the Exile.

Psalms 90, the initial psalm of Book IV, plays a pivotal role in her analysis. The only psalm attributed to Moses "performs the literary role of sending the reader/hearer back to the beginning of the Psalter, back to Psalms 1 and 2 and the ideas of YHWH's Torah and YHWH's kingship" (86). After the presentation of the collapse of the Davidic monarchy, Psalm 90 points the readers back to their beginning as a nation and the chosen people of God. From this focal point to the end of Book V (Ps. 145) and the conclusion of the Psalter (Psalms 146-150: the final five praise hymns), the readers/hearers repeatedly are reminded and encouraged to act on the assurance that Yahweh is still king, despite their present position of being a people without a country and without an earthly king.

With her proposal of the pivotal nature of Psalm 90 for the canonical community, looking backward to Torah and forward to the kingship of Yahweh, DeClaissé-Walford

reflects the perspective of an earlier work of Walter Brueggemann ("Response to James L. Mays, 'The Question of Context,'" in *The Shape and Shaping of the Psalter*, ed. J. C. McCann, JSOTSup 159, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993). Brueggemann suggests that Psalm 73, following 72, is the pivot point of the Psalter. "We are permitted to see the Psalms as a dramatic struggle from obedience (Psalm 1) through dismay (Psalm 73 after 72) to praise (Psalm 150)" (41).

DeClaissé-Walford's concurs with Gerald Wilson (*The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, SBLDS 76, Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985) in his finding significant clues to the shape of the Psalter in the five psalms which close each book. In her examination of the macrostructure of the Psalter, she analyzes the first and last psalms of each book, demonstrating how they convey the themes of the entire book. She suggests that "other clues to the shaping of the Psalter also exist—clues that can be discovered by understanding the historical backgrounds and hermeneutical underpinnings of the postexilic community" (34). Her primary contributions to the discussion of the shape and shaping of the Psalter are her presentation of the dual themes of the Book—Yahweh's Torah and Yahweh's kingship—and her conclusion that the canon was the means through which Yahweh's covenant people survived (and continue to survive) as a unique believing community. When believers are overwhelmed by the difficulties of life, whether exile caused by the Babylonians or the trials and tribulations of twentieth century western culture, reading from the beginning of the Psalter and continuing on until they reach the end leads them to the inevitable conclusion that Yahweh was and *still* is King.

Francis Kimmit, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

**Jan L. Koole, *Isaiah, Part 3, Volume 2: Isaiah 49-55, Historical Commentary on the Old Testament*, Leuven: Peeters, 1998, xxv + 454 pp.**

The series to which this commentary belongs is beginning to establish itself as a major resource both for scholarly understanding of the text of the Old Testament and for responsible exegesis to undergird exposition and preaching. Although ultimately the team of contributors will be internationally representative, the early volumes to have appeared are by our Dutch colleagues (the present one being the translation of a contribution to the 'Commentaar op het Oude Testament' series). This is especially welcome, as otherwise their valuable work is all too often available to only a handful of specialists.

In conscious distinction from many newer forms of interpretation, the series is firmly historical in orientation, and this is based squarely on a theological understanding of the Bible as God's word originally imparted at specific times and places. Traditional forms of critical scholarship are thus required in order to hear it aright in the modern world. The series is intended to serve the church and the scholarly communities by paying attention both to the historical specificity of the text and to the history of its interpretation through the ages.

To meet this challenging agenda, each paragraph of the text is studied under several headings. In the present volume, a new translation is followed first by an introductory discussion of 'essentials and perspectives'. Here, a simplified running exegesis incorporates copious references to the New Testament, and occasionally to later

Christian and Jewish interpreters as well. It is this section which will be of most help to pastors and preachers.

Two sections of 'scholarly exposition' follow, and they are understandably longer and more technical. The first is of an introductory nature, treating such issues as the connection of the paragraph to its wider context, form criticism, and the literary structure of the passage. Finally, and fullest of all, there follows a verse-by-verse 'exegesis', which treats the Hebrew text in great detail, with a battery of references to secondary literature and seemingly no stone left unturned.

Being the second of Koole's projected three volumes on Isaiah 40-66, the present work has no introduction (that having been included in the volume on chapters 40-48, which appeared in 1997), but starts straight in at 49:1-6.

On the whole, Koole's commentary may be characterized as decidedly traditional, but not in any obscurantist sense. He accepts that with chapter 40 a new voice from the Babylonian exile is heard in Isaiah, but he is conscious too of the links between the various parts of the book as a whole. Beyond that, however, he argues in dialogue with the whole range of modern opinion in favor of the unity of 40-55. Thus, for instance, no major break is allowed, as some have maintained, between chapters 48 and 49, and similarly he rejects theories of redactional layering in the text, which have become widespread in recent years; even the unity of 50:10-11 with the remainder of chapter 50 is stoutly defended.

In terms of text and philology, too, Koole is highly conservative. Many proposals in both spheres have, of course, been advanced over the years, and not the least value of this commentary will be that Koole has collected and evaluated these with great diligence. His conclusions begin to become predictable, however, as time and again he defends the superiority of the Masoretic text. Caution is certainly welcome in this sphere, where sometimes in the past conjecture has been allowed to become rampant. Nevertheless, the fact of the matter is that we know from manuscript evidence that errors did sometimes occur in the course of textual transmission, and there are places where emendation, especially if it is supported by the ancient versions or the manuscripts of Isaiah from Qumran, may well be preferable to the defense of a reading where meaning can scarcely be extracted without special pleading. Similarly, there are occasions where the meaning of a Hebrew word may have been lost over the course of time and where comparison with related Semitic languages may be illuminating. Naturally, there are proper methods to be followed in this, and it is unfortunate that failure to attend to these in the past has given the exercise a bad name, but that should not prevent so cautious a scholar as Koole from appealing to it when it clarifies an obscurity. There are examples of both these approaches to the text where in my opinion Koole seems unnecessarily to sidestep any such departure from tradition.

Finally, the results of the exposition are also traditional. Not least, it may be noted that, very much against the tide of current scholarship, he defends an interpretation of the servant figure in (so far as this volume goes) 49:1-6, 50:4-9 and 52:13-53:53:12 as a future savior figure. This allows him, of course, also to ascribe these passages to the same author as the rest of the material.

Koole's commentary is not one, therefore, which breaks significant new ground, and in some respects this is no bad thing. It is likely to be valued most in the long run for the thoroughness with which it collects, categorizes and describes so much previous



scholarship. Even if his own conclusions are not always convincing, his work will serve as a major resource for anyone wanting to deal in detail with these significant chapters of Isaiah.

H.G.M. Williamson, Oxford University

**Gerald L. Keown, Pamela J. Scalise, and Thomas G. Smothers, *Jeremiah 26-52. Word Biblical Commentary 27.* Dallas: Word, 1995**

**Philip J. King, *Jeremiah: An Archaeological Companion.* Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1993.**

**J. G. McConville, *Judgment and Promise: An Interpretation of the Book of Jeremiah.* Leicester, England/Winona Lake, IN: Apollos/Eisenbrauns, 1993.**

**William McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah*, volume 2, *International Critical Commentary.* Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996**

Beginning in the early 1980s, we witnessed a remarkable amount of scholarly interest in the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah, which has shown no sign of abatement in recent years. The editor of this journal kindly asked me to review these four volumes as a sequel to my critique of developments on the study of Jeremiah since 1980 (see my "Recent Trends in The Study of Jeremiah," *Ashland Theological Journal* 25[1993], 75-95). There I summarized the new works in light of their contributions to five of the most important exegetical issues in Jeremiah: authorship and composition, historical background, the book's relationship to Deuteronomy, textual problems in Jeremiah, and theological contributions. This brief review provides an opportunity to supplement that presentation.

Two of the volumes under review here are companions to works reviewed in the 1993 article: McKane's *International Critical Commentary* volume 2 as well as the *Word Biblical Commentary* series second volume, which completes the work of Craigie, Kelley, and Drinkard (WBC 26, 1991). McKane's second volume gives him a venue for elaborating on his "rolling corpus" approach to Jeremiah, which puts him at variance with the regnant Duhm-Mowinckel source theory. The evidence from the second half of Jeremiah leads McKane to conclusions similar to the ones detailed in his volume 1. The corpus of texts in Jeremiah is "the product of a long growth extending into the post-exilic period" (p. clxxii). The prose of chapters 26-29 and 34-45 is, in McKane's view, a combination of a Baruch core and Deuteronomistic redaction. He believes that ancient principles determining the shape of prophetic books dictated the inclusion of promises of restoration and threats against foreign nations as essential constituents of such books (as in Isaiah 13-23 and Ezekiel 25-32 and elsewhere). Thus Jeremiah 30-33 (the Book of the Covenant) and 46-51 (oracles against the nations) were necessary to round out the "book" of Jeremiah. Such an approach complicates the view that these texts have close associations with Jeremiah himself, and McKane traces only isolated sayings to the sixth century BC. Like the rest of the book, these prophecies contributed to a literary and theological portrait of Jeremiah, which were intended to serve a wider religious function within the exilic and postexilic Jewish community. McKane concludes that the shorter text of the Septuagint is a witness to a more original Hebrew text than that of the Masoretic Tradition. As in the first volume, McKane intentionally eschews theological interpretation.

After the untimely death of Peter Craigie in 1988, the editors of the *Word Biblical Commentary* series decided to use multiple authors to complete his work on Jeremiah. Craigie's work in the first volume comprised the introduction and commentary on the

first seven chapters of Jeremiah. The second volume contains no new introduction materials, but completes the commentary proper (Scalise contributed the commentary for chapters 26-34, Keown for chapters 35-45 and 52, and Smothers for chapters 46-51). The authors are to be commended for providing a useful volume, fittingly dedicated to the memory of Professor Craigie, whose death at age 50 is still a distinct loss in the evangelical scholarly community. The inevitable degree of disjointedness in such a composite work is kept to a minimum and is not distracting from an otherwise useful commentary.

The impressive book by McConville addresses in particular one of the five exegetical issues related to interpreting Jeremiah, namely, its relationship to Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History. Scholars are divided between those who see the book as essentially a Deuteronomistic product (the majority opinion among scholars), and those who see the book as coming largely from the prophet himself. McConville contends that "the characterization of Jeremiah as Deuteronomistic obscures its individuality and vitality, and retards rather than furthers the task of its elucidation" (p. 11). His compelling argument relies on the identification of a governing concept in the book, which organizes the diverse materials. The concept has the theology of new covenant at its center, and marks the book as distinct from the driving issues of the Deuteronomistic History. He believes further that the book was produced during the lifetime of the prophet himself through repeated communications with the exiles, perhaps in the context of the prophet's latter years. McConville combines a helpful summary of the scholarship on Jeremiah with a genuinely fresh approach, which all future interpreters of the book will need to address.

The volume by Philip King is a genuinely unique contribution. Rather than a commentary proper, the volume presents archaeological artifacts and texts of the late seventh and early sixth centuries BC in order to elucidate the text of the book of Jeremiah. Fortunately for those of us interested in Jeremiah, this period is one of the best attested periods in Israel's history. King's volume presents artifactual and inscriptional evidence touching on nearly every aspect of the daily life of Judah in Jeremiah's time. After brief chapters on the book of Jeremiah itself, its historical and geographical setting, the author systematically presents archaeological evidence on a variety of issues, including literacy, worship, funerary customs, agriculture and crafts. Richly illustrated, this volume is a welcome supplement to the many commentaries now available on Jeremiah, and will be especially useful to non-specialists in archaeology.

In sum, the intense scholarly interest devoted to the Book of Jeremiah has continued and these new volumes make their own unique contributions to the work.

Bill T. Arnold

**Brian B. Schmidt, *Israel's Beneficent Dead: Ancestor Cult and Necromancy in Ancient Israelite Religion and Tradition*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 400 pp., 1994.**

The past decade or so has witnessed a remarkable recrudescence of interest in ancestor worship and the possibility of cults of the dead in the ancient Near East in general, and in early Israel in particular. The biblical evidence is scant and open to a variety of interpretations, which makes it difficult to place in its ancient Eastern context.

Whereas previous scholarship tended to deny the presence of ancestral worship in ancient Israel, it is now generally agreed that normative Yahwism battled against the practice of necromancy and other death rituals, such as self-laceration and offerings to deceased ancestors (see for example, Theodore J. Lewis, *Cults of the Dead in Ancient Israel and Ugarit* [HSM 39; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989], and his distinction between the "Yahwism which became normative" and "popular religion," pages 1-2). As with such practices in the comparative cultures, it is generally assumed that Israelite cults of the dead sought to appease the dead or secure favors from them.

In this new research, something of a consensus has emerged. Ancestor worship in Egypt and Mesopotamia is generally well attested and was thought to be an effective way to gain the favor of the dead, who it was believed could either bestow blessings or act malevolently on behalf of the living. Based largely on re-evaluation of several important texts from Ugarit (which now appears to have had a vibrant cult of ancestor worship comparable to that in Mesopotamia and Egypt), the prevailing opinion is that on this topic, Israel shared a cultural continuity with her neighbors. It is now widely believed that early Israelite Yahwism borrowed many Canaanite motifs while rejecting others. Though early Yahwism is difficult to distinguish from Canaanite religion, a normative Yahwism gradually emerged, which is reflected in the prophetic and Deuteronomistic literature. This normative expression of Israelite religion consistently condemned ancestor worship and death rituals. Vestiges of ancestor worship and necromancy persisted in the textual witness (for example, 1 Samuel 28), which probably reflects on the veracity of these textual traditions because the editors would have sought to expunge such reflexes from the written record. The new scholarly consensus assumes an ongoing battle throughout Israel's history between normative Yahwism and practitioners of death rituals in the popular religion.

In the impressive monograph under review here, Brian Schmidt demurs. Schmidt believes interest in the dead developed first in the ancient Near East (especially the Neo-Assyrian empire), and entered Israel only in the late eighth and seventh centuries because of Assyrian influence.

This is a most impressive piece of scholarship, which analyzes biblical and extra-biblical texts from Ebla, Mari, Ugarit, Emar and others. Schmidt is adept at handling all of the languages required to do such research, and has produced an important volume, both for its innovative interpretation of the evidence, and for his extensive documentation and bibliography. With regard to Schmidt's particular arguments, I am drawn to much of his analysis of the earlier materials. He has demonstrated the precariousness of arguing for ancestral divination in ancient Israel based on the "gods of the fathers" references, and comparisons with Ebla and Ugaritic king lists. However, his treatment of the important text concerning Saul's necromancy at Endor (1 Samuel 28) leaves us less satisfied. He argues for its late or post-deuteronomistic origins as a means for discounting the practices described there in early Israel. I find such an assumption difficult to square with the way in which the traditions of the Deuteronomistic History were preserved and compiled.

In sum, this is a helpful and scholarly corrective to those who assume too much presence for ancestral worship and cults of the dead in early Israel. However, definitive answers to some of our questions will have to await future research on these extremely difficult texts.

Bill T. Arnold



**Morna D. Hooker, *Beginnings: Keys that Open the Gospels*. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1997. 94 pp., paper, \$12.00.**

Professor Hooker of Cambridge University presented the John Albert Hall lectures in Victoria, British Columbia. These lectures are the text of this book dedicated to analyzing each of the four "beginning" gospels of the New Testament. One might find this format to be a stimulating teaching series as we "begin" the new millennium. There is so much foreboding at the threshold of the new millennium and this could be a way of presenting the "good news" of the gospel in an interesting manner.

Each of the gospel introductions is described by the author as a "key" to unlocking its meaning. Luke's key does not do well unlocking the truth of John's gospel and vice-versa. Luke, for example, seems to be undecided about where and how he wants to begin...so he writes several introductions which bring us into the truth of his gospel. And, yet, each of these introductions by Luke have a link with one another that is important to explore. The link we discover is the key to the introduction of Luke's Acts of the Apostles.

One has the impression that this series of lectures is only a preliminary introduction to the reader's own study of the gospels. In this sense the book is quite attractive as it beckons one to read more and to think about what the "beginnings" say about the "endings."

"What we call the beginning is often the end  
And to make an end is to make a beginning"

*T.S. Eliot, Four Quartets, Little Gidding V*

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, Texas

**T. Dwyer, *The Motif of Wonder in the Gospel of Mark*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996, 243 pp., \$58.50.**

With this work, Dwyer presents a revised Aberdeen University Ph.D. dissertation on the meaning and significance of "wonder" and "amazement" in Mark.

Dwyer's thesis is that wonder and amazement in Mark signify a *necessary* and *engaged* response to divine intervention in creation, a response to God's all-encompassing Kingdom rule and salvation through Jesus (198). Wonder may reflect a positive response to - or rejection of - God's deeds in Jesus.

Following some reflections on methodology (Chapter 1), Dwyer sets out to explore the Greco-Roman (Chapter 2), Early Jewish (Chapter 3), and Early Christian (Chapter 4) concept of "wonder." The results are then compared (Chapter 7) with his comprehensive but not too detailed analysis of "wonder" in Mark (Chapters 5 and 6). His use of primary and secondary literature in these chapters is informed, and includes a substantial number of French and German works.

One or two comments on methodology are necessary before we evaluate the content of Dwyer's thesis.

Dwyer assumes literary dependency among the synoptic Gospels as well as Markan priority. He follows the redaction-critical approach and attempts to relate this methodology to narrative criticism. Dwyer still believes in the possibility of being able to separate tradition and redaction, the latter being primarily identified by Peabody's

'recurring phraseology' criterion. Identifying a motif in the narrative also follows a 'frequency' criterion (i.e. intentional) as well as the 'avoid ability' of the motif (i.e. the appearance of the motif in unlikely contexts; Freedman). Compared with classical redaction-critical works it becomes readily apparent, however, that Dwyer does not want to go through the meticulous rigors of *demonstrating* at each point whether he is dealing with redaction or tradition. Thus his redaction-critical comments often sound merely apodictic. Using both redaction criticism and narrative analysis, Dwyer hopes to pay attention to detail (redaction criticism) and the whole (narrative analysis). This sounds impressive. Only: the fact that Dwyer naively believes that a mere 'recurring phraseology' can be *purely* redactional and thus represents a creative *addition* to the material by the writer already sets him against the possibility that Mark may simply focus on the reliable report of a *historical phenomenon of wonder* among those who responded and reacted to Jesus. If that were so, then Mark's 'redaction' would have to give way to Mark favoring a particular historical motif (compare the *historical motif* of Jesus' care for the *outcast* in Luke), and nothing else! In that case, the word 'redaction' would be utterly misplaced (especially if one *really* understands the anthropocentric, Cartesian underpinnings of the thoroughly skeptical and ahistorical principles of 'redaction criticism' in the milieu of Troeltsch's historical criticism, Bultmann's form criticism and Marxsen's redaction criticism). The word 'compositional emphasis' would then be more appropriate. Is Dwyer aware of the fact that he walks hermeneutically over hot coals as he desires to present a tidy methodological *modus operandi*?

According to Dwyer, the motif of wonder is uncommon in *miracle stories* in Greco-Roman, early Jewish and early Christian literature (including divine-man literature [196]); infrequent in biographical literature and stories of esteemed teachers. Rather, in Greco-Roman literature, wonder flinctions in connection with "signs, portents, dreams or *divine interventions* in general" (196, italics HFB). They are not associated with miracle workers as such. Similarly, Jewish end-time expectation is that God would "amaze" Israel" (cf. Hos 3:5; 196). At times "wonder" is associated with Messianic hopes.

Early Christian literature often indicates that wonder is "a *necessary* experience," (italics by the author; 197) conveying either a positive response or a form of rejection and may be part of taking notice of that which may lie beyond the natural, visible world (cf. Mk 5:33).

The synoptic comparison yields the observation that Mark uses the motif of 'wonder' "with an intensity, frequency and mystery that surpasses the other synoptics. The Markan use of wonder is continually softened by Matthew and Luke." (196). Dwyer shows that "wonder" is not so much an expression of disbelief and "defective response" as it is in various ways an *engagement* with the *surprise* caused by what Jesus does and says (contra Stacy, who identifies 'wonder' and 'fear' as defective responses to Jesus, Kelber, Wrede, and Kingsbury). 'Wonder' as a reaction comes from many different groups identified in Mark: "Reactions of wonder come from friend, enemy, Jew, Gentile, people, leaders, those 'on the way' and those opposed, as co-existent with faith and understanding, and as co-existent with murderous opposition. Wonder in Mark appears to be a multivalent motif which resists paradigms and simplified categories. If anything, the reaction is necessary and essential as God breaks in to rule and save with power." (198)

Dwyer ably shows that the motif of wonder (over God's surprising and awe-inspiring acts in Christ) continues through the passion narrative and thus indicates that God is still intervening in history by means of the *suffering* Messiah. The christological import of Dwyer's study focuses on the fact that "wonder" highlights Jesus as "the spirit-anointed agent of the kingdom" (199). With his rule, God breaks into the visible world by means of Jesus and thus triggers "wonder."

Despite his tentative methodology, Dwyer draws attention to a motif which definitely plays an important part in Mark's narrative. Dwyer's thematic contribution to 'wonder in Mark' is convincing and theologically helpful.

Corrigenda:

1. Franz Mussner, not Müssner! (e.g., p. 19 fn 24; p. 216; 241)
2. p. 214: Linnemann: "Der wiedergefundene Markusschluss"
3. p. 28, fii.6: Barry Blackburn's Ph.D. thesis was published as *Theios Anēr and the Markan Miracle Tradition*. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1991
4. p. 28, line 3 from bottom: (1986)
5. p. 213, line 4 from bottom: IO.1?17-31'
6. p. 141 n. 203 *Verklärungserzählung*
7. p. 200, fn. 1: ...für den neutestamentlichen Begriff...
8. p. 202 "Mark's story is indeed a story"

Hans F. Bayer, Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis

**Rebecca I. Denova, *The Things Accomplished Among Us. Prophetic Tradition in the Structural Pattern of Luke-Acts* JSNTSup 141, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.**

In this work, Rebecca Denova argues that, the view that Luke used the Scriptures of Israel strictly as an apologetic device flounders over the problem of Luke's continued use of the prophetic tradition for a story that would have had no relevance to his Gentile church community. Denova views her work as innovative in part because it focuses on the structure of Luke-Acts in relation to prophetic fulfillment and not simply the content of Luke-Acts. She argues that "what has been significantly overlooked in studies of Luke's 'fulfillment of prophecy' is that all the events which involve Jesus and the community are eschatological events, manifesting the literal fulfillment of prophetic oracles concerning 'the last days'." That is, all the events prophesied for "the last day" have been accomplished among us.' The prophets are not fulfilled in the light of the "church" or "Christianity" but in the light of what was promised to Israel in the Scriptures (p.20). Previous treatments of the "fulfillment of prophecy" do not account for the place of Acts 16-28 in Luke's use of the Scriptures of Israel, and Denova considers this lacuna unsatisfactory. For Luke, much of the "fulfillment of prophecy" can only take place in the story of the disciples in Acts. In fact, the validity of Jesus' claim to messiahship is inadequate without the events narrated in Acts. Luke used scriptural typology throughout Luke-Acts, rewriting the story of Jesus and the early Church in light of the story of Israel. Luke's use of the Scriptures should not be limited to explicit citations, which would leave most of the last half of Acts without any scriptural



component. In fact, it is a "fundamental misconception" according to Denova, to imagine that scriptural content and structure has fallen away in the second half of Acts (p.24).

Denova approaches Luke-Acts through narrative criticism. It is necessary to ask about the structure and content of the text before asking questions about genre or history. She argues that it is necessary to find the relationship between the prophetic tradition which Luke claims is fulfilled, and the unified narrative of Luke-Acts. Establishing this unified narrative requires identifying the structural pattern of the entirety of Luke-Acts. Denova contends that the view that Luke-Acts reflects a shift from the first Jewish disciples to a Gentile church which the Jews oppose is without warrant in Luke-Acts. She argues that the combination of a "prophetic structural pattern and biblical typology" illustrates the author's point of view, which is the same in both the Gospel and Acts (p.25).

The bulk of the book traces this prophetic tradition and its relation to the sequence of events in Luke-Acts through a narrative-critical reading. This differs from other treatments of the "fulfillment" motif in Luke-Acts which generally focus on direct citations with citation formulas. Luke's grand design for the structural pattern of his two-volume work was to continue the story of Israel into the life of Jesus and his followers" (p.26). Denova argues that the structural pattern Luke used for Luke-Acts came from the text of Isaiah. The author of Luke-Acts employed three main literary devices to show the relationship between events in the story: scriptural citation, biblical typology, and narrative parallelism. Denova develops this relationship most fully in chapter 3. Denova argues that for Luke, every event fulfills the Scriptures of Israel in some way, with or without a citation. Denova argues that a type may be present if there is a coincidence between events in Luke's narrative and parallel passages in the Scriptures of Israel. One isolated instance does not show typology. Also, the context in Luke-Acts should have an association with the context of the parallel passage. The proposed typology in Luke-Acts also must demonstrate a relationship between the message of Luke-Acts and the parallel passage. The rejection scenes in Luke-Acts are clearly typological. Denova concludes that allusions to the Scriptures of Israel link the community to Israel in both Luke and Acts. Luke's theological understanding of the Scriptures of Israel and how he reads them is consistent from Luke's Gospel to Acts. Denova seeks to show that Luke-Acts reflects the work of a Jewish author presenting arguments to other Jews that the prophets have been "fulfilled," rather than reflecting a second century "Gentile Christianity."

Denova argues that Luke 4:16-30 serves an important role overlooked by scholars. Most scholars view it as programmatic for the initial rejection of Jesus and later the rejection of the Jews. Robert Brawley suggests that it legitimates Jesus. Denova argues that this passage is a "programmatic model for the legitimation of all God's agents in Luke-Acts," which she develops in chapters 4 (Luke) and 5 (Acts). This passage is not merely about rejection but describes how the entire story in Luke-Acts unfolds. This passage shows that the inclusion of the Gentiles does not involve the exclusion of the Jews, as this would be "inconsistent with prophetic tradition" (p.153). This positive evaluation of Luke-Acts vis-a-vis the Jews is convincing and commendable. Denova continues tracing elements in Luke 4:16-30 in Paul's activities in Acts, focusing on the eschatological themes of the inclusion of the Gentiles, the rejection of the unrepentant (both Jewish and Gentile non-believers) and the restoration of Zion. Denova concludes

that Luke created the portrait of Paul in Acts through the use of prophetic types, especially Jonah, the rejected prophet.

Some readers will be disappointed with Denova's evaluation of Luke as an historian. She argues that all the historical details in Luke-Acts exist only to show the relation between prophetic oracles and events in the lives of Jesus and his early followers. Luke is not trying at all to present a coherent chronological account. Historical data serve a narrative function and Luke has no interest in them as historical information. This dichotomy Denova has created is unnecessary. In chapter 2, she describes the genre of Luke-Acts as "typological history." Her view is similar to Goulder's and open to the same objections.

Nevertheless, those interested in the use of the Scriptures of Israel in Luke-Acts, the "fulfillment of prophecy" motif identified by many in Luke-Acts, and critical questions of genre, dating, author and audience will want to read this book. Readers will be aided by Denova's fresh approach to old problems through a narrative-critical approach and her treatment of subjects without assuming the consensus on many issues. Her study departs from previous treatments of the "fulfillment of prophecy" motif such as those of Rese and Bock, by focusing on the narrative structure of Luke-Acts and on "intertextual" features beyond direct quotations of the Scriptures of Israel to understand Luke's notion of "fulfillment". Denova has made a helpful, engaging contribution to Luke-Acts scholarship.

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**Herman Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John, A Theological Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.**

In his preface Herman Ridderbos states that his interest is in presenting a "theological exegesis of the Gospel, that is, in dealing with the significance of the gospel message that the Evangelist had in view as he wrote" (p. xiii).

Interested readers of the Fourth Gospel can be grateful to Ridderbos for both this intention and its achievement in this lengthy, stimulating and satisfying commentary.

Eschewing treatment of the plethora of preliminary questions that cluster around study of this gospel Ridderbos begins by presenting a sustained examination of the "Peculiar Character of the Fourth Gospel." He adroitly addresses the issue of the relationship between history and revelation with respect to the questions of authorship and the narrow focus of the gospel on Christology concluding that, "The point at issue is always what Jesus said and did in his self-disclosure on earth, but it is transmitted in its lasting validity with the independence of an apostle who was authorized to speak by Jesus and endowed with the promise of the Spirit" (p. 16).

From this starting point/conclusion the commentary proceeds to elucidate with insight John's account of Jesus. Taking this concern seriously produces an exposition focused on answering the question "Who is Jesus?" The result is an account that takes the historical person of Jesus seriously (but not naively so) and one that keeps in focus the stated historical purpose of Jesus' coming--to bring life through his sacrificial death. On both counts there is enormous benefit for the reader.

Ridderbos' concern to exegete in line with the stated purpose of the gospel is welcome in that he takes the author's own statement in John 20:31 seriously; although

the understanding of that purpose may be more evangelistic than Ridderbos allows.

In the midst of so much scholarly material concerning the gospel it is refreshing to read a commentary that is focused on the text and keeps secondary literature discussions to a minimum. Having said this, Ridderbos is not unaware of the contemporary scholarship and interacts judiciously affording insight into European scholarship in particular. Perhaps due to the date of the commentary there is a lack of interaction with more modern literary approaches--one suspects to the detriment of the exposition at points; although Ridderbos' generally 'relaxed' approach to issues of structure will be appreciated by many who find the intricacies of some such analyses difficult to follow.

The many issues in Johannine theology are not ignored but dealt with along the way, again in succinct and insightful fashion, with a final collection of statements addressing issues of authorship and the presence of a Johannine 'circle'.

Various extended discussions of topics occur along the way--notably on the various possible interpretations of John 6, the problem of the identity of the Jews, Flesh and Spirit, The Paraclete--but one wishes that even more such discussions and syntheses were present.

For all its theological intention, the format of the commentary with its measured procession through the text leaves some important theological themes embedded in piecemeal fashion through the exposition when the reader may have benefitted from a gathering together of material and more extended theological reflection.

Two areas come immediately to mind. The nature of the 'kosmos' and the nuanced portrait offered in the gospel concerning the interaction and relationships between the Father, Son and kosmos is worthy of further sustained reflection. So, also, is the question of the tension between the notions of 'determinism/predestination' and 'belief' in the Gospel. Ridderbos seems uneasy with any notion of predestination in John but it is difficult to get a grasp on the whole of this thought on this particular topic due to the scattered nature of the comments.

There are other issues and themes that could have had similar treatment but perhaps we wait in hope for a Johannine theology to explore these at greater length?

We are in the debt of both Ridderbos and his translator for a weighty addition to the ever expanding body of literature on John's Gospel. One leaves this commentary thankful for a careful exposition focused around the question--Who is Jesus?; an exposition which allows the text to speak on its own terms, giving the reader food for thought and the preacher much to say.

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**Ajith Fernando, *The NIV Application Commentary: Acts*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1998. 464 pp., \$24.99.**

The author of this commentary, a graduate of Asbury and Fuller theological seminaries, lives and works in a missionary situation as National Director of Youth for Christ in Sri Lanka. As an Asian theologian he has a rich experience on which to draw when he seeks to expound the contemporary significance of the book of Acts. What we have is a missionary commentary on a missionary book. So very early on when he deals



with the opening verses of the book we get a discussion of truth and postmodernism [58-63] a theme we return to more than once. He shows particular interest in evangelism and what he calls 'follow-through care' of converts and various aspects of the leadership of believers. He suggests that 'the biggest crisis facing the evangelical church today is a spiritually weak leadership' and quotes with approval a dictum of Spurgeon's about the need for people who 'talk in scriptural language' [176]. He also addresses issues in relation to non-Christian religions, for example, the difficulties Jews, Muslims and Buddhists have with the crucifixion of Christ.

The structure of this series of commentaries consists of an exposition of the original meaning of the text, a section headed 'bridging contexts', and then a third section on contemporary significance. Fernando confesses that he does not find this format congenial and that he struggles to contain his exposition within the appropriate categories. He would have preferred to integrate the three sections into one discussion. This becomes evident when for example the same topic is addressed in both the bridging section and that on contemporary significance (so baptism in the Holy Spirit), or when the question, Are signs and wonders for today? is addressed in a bridging section.

In his exposition of the original meaning Fernando draws on the arguments of Ramsay, Bruce and Hemer to argue that the book of Acts is historically reliable. There is little room here given to German scepticism. The Gospels were also 'written as history' and one of the most important responses we can make to pluralism with its relativism and subjective views of truth is to point to 'the evidence for the objective historicity of the Gospels'. Although the author regrets that he had inadequate access to journals writing in Sri Lanka, he nevertheless gives an excellent guide to the literature with which he is in sympathy. At the same time he is prepared to go beyond respected evangelical teachers such as Fee and Stott and argue that narratives can embody Christian principles for today even when the text does not explicitly say so. He concedes that this hermeneutic needs to be employed cautiously [39-40, 556].

There are weak passages in the exposition from time to time. For example he works with a single messianic expectation among the Jews but it is now clear that there was a spectrum of differing views [e.g. *Judaisms and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era*, ed. Jacob Neusner et al Cambridge University Press 1987]. On Peter's speech in Acts 2 he does not comment on the moment when Jesus was made Lord and Christ [v.36] and what this implies about his messianic status before this. He makes no reference to the 'missing words' of 8:36-37. While he has some important comments on contextualisation in relation to Paul's speech to the Areopagus he does not expound the significance of the words Paul quoted from the Greek poets [17:28]. In fact he clearly attributes more importance to the significance of the text for today than to the exposition of its original meaning. At the same time he comes out with striking phrases such as 'suffering in an asprin age' [157-59] and he has some excellent comments of the 'no other name' text of 4:12 [163-66]. He may take an unpopular line in arguing that the early church was right to share resources [182-85] but we probably could have been spared his notes on a talk about biblical unity [185-89].

So a mixed bag: some excellent discussions of the relevance of Acts for mission and evangelism today but readers seeking more detailed exposition of the text will need to refer to some of the commentaries Fernando used.

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**Howard Clark Kee, *To Every Nation under Heaven: The Acts of the Apostles* (The New Testament in Context). Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997.**  
**Paul W. Walaskay, *Acts* (Westminster Bible Companion). Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.**

Kee and Walaskay have both produced commentaries for the general reader. Kee's commentary is part of the series "The New Testament in Context," which emphasizes sociological analysis of New Testament documents. Kee begins with a brief overview of "introductory" issues, such as the origins of Acts, the theology and genre of Acts, and the main emphases of the commentary. According to Kee, the focus of the commentary is on "meaning in the historical context rather than on the modern quest for what is perceived to be objective historical factuality" (p. 13). Kee bases this focus on the view that what is important in analyzing an historical document is its intended meaning, not the certainty of the events it records. So, Kee aims to "consider the various facets of the context in which the writer and his initial readers lived and thought: the religious assumptions, the political framework and structures of power, and above all the sociocultural features of the author and the initially intended readers" (p. 13). After briefly noting traditional and recent views on the authorship of Acts, Kee states that the primary focus of his commentary is on the "special aims, concepts and strategy of its author, rather than on his identity" (p. 2). Kee follows this with a brief section on the history of the interpretation of Acts, highlighting the benefits available from sociocultural analysis of Acts, while criticizing the work of some scholars for trying to force the data into artificial categories like "honor and shame." In asking about "Acts as history," Kee argues that what is of paramount importance when reading an historical work is not to ask, "Is this what really happened?" but, "What meaning is this report seeking to convey?" (P. 13). Kee argues that the genre of Acts is apologetic historiography, with some influence from ancient romances as well. Kee then summarizes the theology of Acts, including brief sections on "The Sovereign God," "Jesus the Messiah," "The Holy Spirit," and "The New People of God."

The commentary itself has a straightforward format. The text of a portion of Acts is given, followed by a summary of the passage, most valuable for the geographical, historical or linguistic details Kee supplies. The translation Kee provides for commentary is idiosyncratic at times, and Kee does not alert the reader when he deviates significantly from more standard translations. Along with this, Kee refers to specific verses in his commentary, but since he provides no verse numbers in his translation, the reader either needs to have the verse numbers memorized or must consult another translation to follow Kee's discussion. Following the commentary Kee supplies a select bibliography, divided into multiple sections, such as "Historical and Sociological Method" and "Paul in Acts" (pp. 338-44) plus indexes of scriptural references, ancient and modern authors and subjects. The bibliography seems generally balanced in the perspective of the works cited, if somewhat modest. Kee also provides additional references in the endnotes.

Although Kee's avowed approach would make for an interesting commentary, he rarely addresses the aims, concepts or strategy of the author. He notes on occasion that the author has crafted his narrative to show that the Way is still part of Judaism and therefore lawful to the Romans and that Christians are no threat to the Roman

government. Beyond this, most of the concepts that may be present in Acts are treated briefly at best. When Kee does treat a concept, he includes material from outside of Acts, including material that post-dates Acts by over a century. Kee does occasionally seek to inject sociological observations into the discussion, noting especially occasions where the church is pictured as unified or when something threatens that unity. Kee repeatedly describes baptism as a rite by which one enters the community of believers, but never addresses its relation to repentance or faith. After attacking those with a different approach to social-scientific criticism, one would expect Kee to do more in the way of presenting an alternative approach that is not so reductionistic.

The best part of the work are the numerous excurses sprinkled throughout the commentary, especially in the section dealing with Paul's third missionary journey where Kee provides geographical descriptions for every city to which Paul traveled. These excurses range from the first, which focuses on the meaning of "apostle" everywhere in the NT except Acts (p. 32), to one on Paul's lodging in Rome (p. 297).

In one excursus, Kee argues that when Luke states that the apostles were gathered in Acts 1, "fully devoted" to prayer (*proseuche*), this actually refers not to the act of prayer but to the place of prayer (pp. 37-38). Many of the excurses, such as the geographical descriptions, are similar to what may be found in a basic Bible dictionary. Others deal with more theological or historical issues, such as the make-up of the Sanhedrin or the issue of the pre-70 A.D. synagogue.

These features make it difficult to determine for whom this book is written. On the one hand, the book assumes the reader is knowledgeable in New Testament studies—including, e.g., an understanding of what is meant by the "Q tradition." The commentary, however, largely restates what the text of Acts already says. Thus, Kee does not really add significantly to a basic understanding of Acts. Were it not for the specialized knowledge presumed, this would be most suitable for a beginning student or non-scholar wishing to understand Acts better.

Paul Walaskay states at the outset of his work that it is for interested lay persons, like Bible study leaders. This volume is part of the Westminster Bible Companion series, a series intended to "help the laity of the church read the Bible more clearly and intelligently" (p. Xi). In keeping with this intended audience, Walaskay avoids technical jargon. Instead, he explains exegetical issues in a simple manner and often offers practical applications or devotional thoughts along the way. The commentary uses the NRSV for a translation, which Walaskay augments by noting when the translation is inadequate or when important textual questions come up, such as at Acts 20:28.

Walaskay begins his commentary with an introduction that covers basic questions like, Who wrote Acts? When was Acts written? To whom was Acts addressed? In addition to these basic questions, the introduction raises other, more contemporary matters. For example, Walaskay discusses the purpose of Acts with regard to Luke's apparent anti-Semitism (pp. 14-16). There is also a section in the introduction entitled "The Book of Acts in the Lives of Contemporary Christians" (p. 21).

The commentary takes a straightforward approach. First, there is a block of the text of Acts (with verse numbers!). Then, Walaskay provides an explanation of this section. While Walaskay's interpretations of each passage are not detailed exegesis, they are in general more informative about the meaning of the text than Kee's. Walaskay generally incorporates scholarly discussion within the course of the commentary but



occasionally treats important matters in a separate section, similar to Kee's excurses. For example, Walaskay provides "Some Concluding Observations regarding Luke's Narrative and Paul's Recollection of the First Christian Council" (pp. 150-51). Walaskay suggests that, rather than the two most common solutions to the apparent differences between Acts and Paul's letters, it may be best to see the two accounts as both "ancient, authoritative and sometimes conflicting" (p. 150). Most probably the "real Paul lies somewhere between Paul's self-disclosures and Luke's portrait" (p. 151).

Walaskay concludes the commentary with a very short bibliography that is not as balanced as Kee's. Unlike Kee's commentary, there are no indexes or endnotes. While this lack may be explained on the basis of the intended audience, the commentary could be helped by having at least an index of subjects. This would be an aid to the Bible study leaders for whom the commentary series is designed.

Along the way, Walaskay discusses important topics in critical scholarship on Acts. For example, in treating Acts 2, Walaskay discusses the source of Peter's speech, Luke's use and creation of speeches and the use and creation of speeches in accounts of the past in Hellenistic times in general (pp. 36-38). Walaskay's discussion of speeches provides an example of just how "contemporary" he seeks to be. This is certainly the first treatment of the speeches of Acts based on the analogy of soap operas that I know of. Such references do, however, somewhat limit the audience for this commentary on cultural grounds.

Walaskay has set himself the task of explaining the text of Acts to educated lay persons, particularly those who are Bible study leaders. He has achieved that goal, while neither ignoring completely important critical issues nor getting involved in overly-technical discussions outside the intention of the commentary. As such this could be a helpful book for group study. Some readers, however, will want a commentary that has a more positive appraisal of Luke as an historian, such as I. Howard Marshall's Tyndale commentary on Acts. Others may find Walaskay's discussions of critical matters, such as ancient speeches, irrelevant. Educated lay persons who want to be aware of these sorts of issues will find this a helpful commentary.

Given the fairly general nature of both commentaries, Kee's and Walaskay's, readers would probably do better with Walaskay's commentary for understanding Acts. Those who want to go into depth on Acts and fully engage critical issues will need to look elsewhere.

Kenneth D. Litwak

**Ivoni Richter Reimer, *Women in the Acts of the Apostles. A Feminist Liberation Perspective.* Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995.**

Going beyond the observation, which others have made, that Acts has a focus on the role of women in the early church, Ivoni Richter Reimer seeks to analyze what Luke says and does not say about women in the book of Acts. After an introduction which outlines the author's perspective and aims, there follow chapters on individual, named women in Acts as well as a chapter on women mentioned briefly or not at all in Acts. This is followed by a summary practical application of the results. Through the stories of women and their struggles in Acts, the author desires that women and men in the present will be inspired and strengthened "in their struggle against oppression and for liberation" (p. 267). It is evident from many such statements throughout the book that the author

wishes her book to be much more than simply academic research.

Richter Reimer seeks to reconstruct the stories of women in Acts from the perspective of Latin American liberation theology and "its clarification through feminist liberation theology" (xix). Richter Reimer gives three reasons to examine the "women" passages in Acts. First the stories and experiences of women in Acts are of particular interest to Latin American liberation theology. Second, up until this book, there has been no thoroughgoing study of the "women" passages in Acts. Third, Acts was chosen because "women, then as now, have a central position in those churches or base communities..." (xix). This book is a commentary on the passages which speak of women in Acts. It is not a verse-by-verse commentary as such, but deals with issues specific to the women in the narrative. Richter Reimer focuses particularly on those points at which she finds the "dominant exegesis" unsatisfactory, i.e., interpretations which are patriarchal, oppressive or which diminish or omit the role of women in the narrative and in early Christianity. For example, New Testament exegesis has neglected women's "material" work. In fact, one "gets the impression that women were constantly shoved into the 'sacred' niche in the patriarchal family and taken care of by their men" (xx).

Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11) is the subject of chapter 1. Richter Reimer argues that Sapphira, while not free of guilt, is not guilty of the same sin as Ananias. Richter Reimer first seeks to show what the sins of Ananias and the sin of Sapphira were. After a lengthy treatment of common property within the first Christian community, the author concludes that the property being sold belonged to Sapphira, for otherwise, she would not have to be involved in the sale. Ananias' sin involved deception in keeping back part of the price of the money, violating the well-being of the community. Sapphira, while guilty of sin, is guilty of a different sin. She was an accomplice to Ananias, but her sin was in not exposing Ananias' sin, not for agreeing with Ananias to keep back part of the price. Rather than seeking the help and protection of the community, Sapphira acceded to the "violence of a patriarchal marriage that in fact was already overcome, or should have been overcome, within the community of the saints" (15). Sapphira's "guilty shared knowledge can only exist in the presence of degenerate structures of power..." (15).

In chapter 2, Richter Reimer argues that the story of Dorcas' revivification is not merely to show Peter as a wonder worker but also to present Dorcas as a role model. She argues further that commentators err in viewing Dorcas as nothing more than a widow making garments. She also participates in spreading the good news, as a committed follower (disciple). Richter Reimer includes a lengthy discussion of views regarding resurrection in early Judaism and Christianity as context for the kind of miracle performed by Peter, which was not a resurrection.

The treatment of Lydia, discussed in chapter 3, is much different from the dominant exegesis of Acts 16. First, Richter Reimer argues that proseuche elsewhere in Greek literature and inscriptions regularly means "synagogue." She asserts therefore that this usage is also present in Acts 16, and that it is only out of patriarchal ideology that commentators refuse to acknowledge proseuche as a synagogue (90). The author also argues that those who sold purple cloth generally made the purple cloth as well, and suggests that Lydia, far from being part of the upper class, was doing a job despised by the upper class as "dirty." Instead, Lydia worked alongside other women in her house and managed to make a subsistence living with them.

The mantic slave girl of Acts 16 is wrongly treated by the dominant exegesis as being liberated by Paul. After discussing the manumission of slaves and property rights of slave owners, Richter Reimer argues that it is inappropriate to view the spirit of Python as an evil spirit or demon. Paul's exorcism bears little resemblance to exorcisms by Jesus or by others in Acts. Having Paul cast out the spirit means that the slave girl's lot in life is now made worse because she is now of no value to her masters.

Just as the dominant exegesis has downplayed the importance of Lydia in the synagogue and in the house church in her home, so too has it downplayed the importance of Priscilla. Commentators on the whole acknowledge Aquila as a tent maker and a companion in Paul's ministry but downplay or omit Priscilla. Richter Reimer shows how the Western text has relegated Priscilla to Aquila's shadow and argues that scholars have implicitly done the same.

Richter Reimer provides much valuable socio-historical background for Acts. Contrary to this reviewer's fears, the book is not a sustained attack on Luke for being too patriarchal, though there are such elements in Richter Reimer's analysis. Instead she focuses on the "dominant exegesis" of passages and seeks to show how the dominant exegetical tradition has downplayed or omitted the significance of women in the Acts of the Apostles. The book also has many detailed discussions of issues that illuminate the first century milieu of Acts. At the same time, however, these discussions are often not integrated into the analysis of the narrative of Acts. There are also questions to be asked for further research. For example, how does the judgment by Richter Reimer that Acts is "androcentric" and "patriarchal" relate to the narrative and theological aims of Luke? Why did Luke include a given story about anyone in Acts? So Richter Reimer's analysis needs to ask questions about women in Acts in the larger context of what the purpose of Acts is—an issue she does not address. Kenneth Litwak, Malpitas, CA

**W. E. Mills and R. F. Wilson, Eds. *Acts and Pauline Writings*. (Mercer Commentary on the Bible, Vol. 7). Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997. Lxxx+291, pp. \$18.95.**

Professors and students engaged in teaching and studying "Acts and Pauline Epistles" will be greatly interested in taking a closer look at Volume 7 of *Mercer Commentary on the Bible* (originally published in 1995). Despite the title of the series, the work consists of both brief commentaries on Acts and the individual books of the *corpus Paulinum* as well as relevant articles ranging from such entries as "Apostle/Apostleship", "Church", "Faith", "Hellenistic World", "Justification", "We-sections", to "Women in the NT". The collection of brief articles and commentaries are reprints from the *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible* and the *Mercer Commentary on the Bible* respectively.

It is the merit of such a book to bring a vast area of study together in one book. The *articles* promise that specialists in various areas (such as D. Aune on "Hellenistic World") will offer a concise and well-informed introduction to the student. Some articles disappoint, however. The entry on "Faith" is too brief and undifferentiated to be theologically helpful. The author (Wayne Ward) presents a shallow understanding of the Reformed view of faith, then claims that faith is a "free acceptance" of God's gift,



i.e. the human "response affirming the work of God", only to state as a "paradox" later that a human being is "enabled to believe" by the grace of God (p. xxxii; one wonders about the exact nature of Ward's anthropology). Likewise, the egalitarian view with regard to roles of "Women in the New Testament" (Molly Marshall, pp. lxxvi-lxxx) is not compared with the complementarian reading of the same data. The *commentaries* serve as useful initial introductions to the content of Acts and Pauline epistles. At times, however, they run the risk of merely retelling the contents present in the New Testament in order to maintain brevity.

One methodological note must suffice before we proceed to a general assessment of the book. Having been exposed to - and lived in - the milieu of German historical-critical study for over two decades, the present reviewer frequently observes insufficient *critical assessment* of so-called "critical scholarship."

In conclusion, the following impression remains: The keen and alert professor will want to "pick the raisins" out of the above mentioned *Dictionary* and *Bible Commentary* and complement them with other significant *journal* articles on key issues relevant to Acts and Pauline Letters. He will reference to diverse and *leading commentaries* wrestling with the literary, historical, and theological issues; he will use relevant *articles* from various *dictionaries* (including the *IVP Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* as well as the *IVP Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*) and thus develop a course that is continuously updated and also reflects diverse theological insights. Despite the merit which the present work possesses, it appears too "ready made" (and in part deficient) to engage the student in genuine literary, historical and theological issues raised by the study of Acts and Pauline epistles.

Pedagogically, it would be useful to include a detailed integrative chart (see only the very brief chart on p. 1x), relating Acts, Pauline chronology and Pauline epistles to each other. Furthermore, for a work such as this, an index would be helpful.

Hans F. Bayer

**Richard B. Hays, *First Corinthians: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, Nashville, TN: John Knox Press, 1997.**

Richard Hays, Professor of New Testament at Duke Divinity School, maintains the strong tradition of the Interpretation series of Bible Commentaries. These are commentaries designed for teaching and preaching purposes. Research background includes serious biblical scholarship with an eye for contemporary application. A knowledge of Greek and Hebrew is not required for understanding the commentary's interpretation. This particular commentary would be appreciated by both the Sunday School teacher and the Sunday morning preacher.

One discovers quickly in this commentary that the author has an interesting view of sociocultural norms and practices of the time. Hays is able to identify thematic links through the sometimes rambling directions of Paul's writing.

Each major section of the commentary has a portion entitled: "Reflections for Teachers and Preachers." The well written comments allow interpreters of the passage to use the text as a mirror in which one can find one's own reflection. For example Hays sees the text of Paul's letter challenging our habit of thinking of ministry as a "profession" and therefore distorting our concept of the church and our role in it. "Are

we using the church as though it were ours, or as though it were an instrument for the advancement of our own careers or causes? If so, we need to be reminded that the church belongs to God, and that it is God's project, not ours. Are we treating church-building as a business or a competitive sport? If so, we are boasting in something other than the gospel."

Individual commentaries in an particular series of commentaries are likely to stand out as exceptional. You might agree with this reviewer that this commentary on First Corinthians is one of the best in the Interpretation Series. Cliff Stewart

**J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians, A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 33A, New York: Doubleday, 1997, 614 pp. + xxiv.**

The letter to the Galatians touches on so many issues central to Pauline studies and the Christian life—the place of the law, justification by faith, the origin and essence of Paul's gospel, the role of the Holy Spirit, and how believers are to live. J. Louis Martyn, Edward Robinson Professor Emeritus of Biblical Theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York, has provided us with an excellent commentary on the letter and insightful discussion of the key themes.

The 614-page volume is much more than a commentary. Martyn gives us 52 essays on selected themes as well as his own translation of the entire letter. In many ways, the essays are the most useful and important part of the book. Through these extended comments, Martyn skillfully immerses the reader into his interpretation of the life setting and drama behind Galatians. Martyn is an outstanding writer and explains the difficult and complex themes with clarity.

Martyn contends that Paul wrote the letter after the Jerusalem Council to the churches he planted in the ethnic territory of Galatia, which would include the cities of Ankyra, Tavium, and Pessinus. There were no synagogues and no Jews in this region; the churches consisted strictly of Gentiles. Shortly after Paul left, a group of Messianic-Jewish evangelists who had some connection with Jerusalem paid a visit to these churches. These Torah-observant Christians subverted what Paul had taught by insisting that the Galatian Gentiles needed to embrace and observe the law, starting with circumcision. They argued that there was no conflict between Christ and the law, he came to fulfill it. Appalled by the sinful lifestyle of these Gentile believers, "the Teachers" insisted that the Torah was their principal ally in subduing the evil inclination ("the flesh").

Martyn argues that Paul wrote in response to the impact these teachers had on these fledgling Christian communities. Much of what Paul wrote, Martyn contends, was in direct response to the content of what they taught.

I find much of Martyn's reconstruction quite convincing. Unfortunately, Martyn does not interact with some of the best of recent scholarship defending a "south Galatia" view (that Paul writes to Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe) that typically leads to a date for the letter prior to the Jerusalem Council. He ignores the important monograph of Colin Hemer (*The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History* [1989]) and is aware of Stephen Mitchell's volume (*Anatolia* [1993]; see also his *ABD* entry on "Galatia"), but does not interact with his arguments. One may now also find

an able defense of the south Galatia view in Ben Witherington's commentaries on Acts and Galatians. Further consideration of this proposal could lead Martyn out of the quandary he faces in having to say that Paul suppresses certain dimensions of the Jerusalem proceedings (p. 208) and shapes his account quite extensively (p. 209).

As is well known from Martyn's other writings, he interprets Paul's gospel in terms of apocalyptic. Rather than focusing on the *parousia* as the high point of God's apocalyptic triumph (as J. C. Becker), Martyn emphasizes the cross of Christ, which marks God's liberating invasion of the present evil age. Jesus' death was the powerful deed that freed us from captivity to the evil powers of this age. There is much to be said for Martyn's explanation of apocalyptic.

Martyn is quite sympathetic to many of the features of the "New Perspective." He attempts to refute the Reformed perspective on Deut 27:26 (cited in Gal 3:10) whereby it is claimed that anyone who disobeys even the smallest detail of the law is under a curse. The impotence of the law, Martyn contends, is not in human inability to keep the whole of the law without stumbling, but rather the inability of the law to bring justification and life. Essentially, Paul's quarrel with the law is that it is not God's elected means of setting things right and supplying the Spirit. He thus travels far down the road with E. P. Sanders in viewing Christ as the solution and then reasoning back to the plight of humanity (contra F. Thielman).

I find Martyn's translation of *dikaioó* as "to rectify" (and thus, "rectified" and "rectification") unsatisfying. Granted, "justification" language comes with a load of theological baggage to contemporary readers, but given the long history of usage of term, it cannot be jettisoned altogether. "Rectify" comes with its own contemporary set of usages that are not altogether congruent with our Greek term.

This is an outstanding commentary and will have a significant impact on the course of scholarship on Galatians. Because of the clarity and readability, it will be quite helpful to students. Clinton E. Arnold, Talbot School of Theology

**Terence Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles: Remapping the Apostle's Convictional World*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997, xvii + 409 pp.**

How can we explain Paul's desire to engage in a mission to the Gentiles? For most readers of this journal, the answer to that question will seem self-evident. Paul believed that all people, whether Jews or Gentiles, were "sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving his displeasure" (to quote the membership vows of many Presbyterian churches). The insight that Gentiles could be rescued from this situation by faith in Christ came to Paul at his conversion on the road to Damascus when God called him to go "far away to the Gentiles" and preach the gospel (Acts 22:21).

In this provocative monograph, Terence Donaldson argues that this traditional understanding of Paul's mission to the Gentiles is wrong. Instead, both before and after his conversion, the pattern of Paul's convictions about the Gentiles follows closely a pattern that we find in Jewish literature from Paul's period: Gentiles who wanted to escape the eschatological wrath of God were required to become Jewish proselytes. The only major difference between the pattern of Paul's convictions about the Gentiles before and after the Damascus event was that prior to his conversion the boundary



marker for God's people had been the Jewish law, but now the boundary marker was Christ.

What prompted Paul to view Christ and the Jewish law as mutually exclusive boundary markers? What caused him, somewhat inconsistently, to maintain even after his conversion that the distinction between Jew and Gentile remained important? The answer to both questions lies in the eschatological expectations of the early Christians, including Paul. Paul believed that in Christ the final age had dawned and that Christ would return shortly. When he returned, only those who believed in him would be saved. Such fervent expectations led Paul to elevate allegiance to Christ over allegiance to the Jewish law as the requirement for entry into the company of those who would be saved from God's eschatological wrath.

At the same time, since Paul expected Christ to come very soon it was possible for him still to speak of Israel as a distinct people and the Jews as a distinct social group. Thus when Paul says that at the eschaton "all Israel" will be saved (Rom 11:26), he means that soon all the ethnic Jews alive during his lifetime will believe in Christ and experience the restoration promised by the prophets. Just as he thought before his conversion, Paul believed that Gentiles who had become proselytes by the final day would be rescued from God's wrath. Now, however, after his conversion, Paul believed that Gentiles became proselytes by faith in Christ, not by "works of the law" and that Jewish belief in Christ would be part of the scenario of eschatological restoration.

The trouble with this reconstruction of Paul's convictions about the Gentiles lies not in its claim that Paul saw Christ and the Jewish law as mutually exclusive boundary markers for the people of God, but in its explanation of passages in Paul that show a continued interest in ethnic distinctions (e.g. Rom 1:16; 9:27; 11:11-32; 15:25-27). It is unclear why such passages cannot refer to the chronological pattern of the gospel's progress from a Jewish context to the Gentile world and back, at the eschaton, to the involvement of Jews. It is true that this matches no previously known pattern of Jewish convictions about the Gentiles, but, if it is unique, it is not the only element of Paul's theology that has no known precedent. Moreover, unless we adopt something like the traditional explanation of these passages, it becomes difficult to account for those places in Paul's letters where Paul envisions Christians—whether from Jewish or Greek backgrounds—as a third entity, "the church of God" (1 Cor 9:19-21; 10:32).

This brief summary and note of caution can scarcely do justice to the thoroughness and care with which Donaldson has argued his case. This is a significant book for Pauline scholarship, and will be widely discussed. If in the end it fails to convince, it nevertheless succeeds in placing a critical issue in Pauline theology back on the discussion table and in raising the debate to a new level.

Frank Thielman, Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, Birmingham, AL

**Martin Hengel and Anna Maria Schwemer, *Paul between Damascus and Antioch: the Unknown Years*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997, xiv + 530 pp.**

Of Paul's ministry, which spanned some thirty years, we have a degree of knowledge corresponding to only seven of these years (during which he wrote most of his extant correspondence — an important arm of Paul's ministry to which Luke makes

no reference). A significant, and formative, portion of Paul's Christian biography is thus shrouded in comparative darkness, and yet it was during these relatively 'silent years' that the basis of Paul's theology was formed and developed into maturity.

In *Paul between Damascus and Antioch: the Unknown Years*, Hengel explores this formative phase of the apostle's Christian ministry. He outlines the historical, political and Jewish religious environment of Damascus, Arabia, Tarsus, and, at greatest length, Antioch. With regard to these places, Hengel affirms that Damascus was the setting for one of the earliest Christian communities in a Hellenistic city outside Palestine; it is only from Luke that we learn the largely undisputed fact that Tarsus was the birthplace of Paul; it may have been during Paul's time in 'Arabia' that he developed his views on circumcision; and the suggestion, made by Bousset and reinforced later by Bultmann and more recently by Becker, that an early Hellenistic Christian community in Antioch was significant in the development of Paul's own theology is roundly opposed. Furthermore, he argues that the influence of Paul on Antioch was probably greater than any influence the Antioch Christian community may have had on Paul.

The overall picture which emerges from Luke's second account is powerfully and to a large extent corroborated by the Pauline corpus of letters. Any suggestion that Paul was a vacillating thinker whose theology was continually being developed does no justice to the evidence which emerges in a comparison between his earliest and later letters. The years between Damascus and Antioch were extremely important for his later ministry, and it was during these years, well before his first extant letter, that the foundations of his ministry and theology were formed.

Paul's sense of apostleship, specifically to the gentiles, derives from the earliest period following his conversion. This motivation toward mission is prompted by the content of the message, rather than his Jewish background. Furthermore, the foundation of Paul's theology — including his christology and understanding of the rôle of the Torah — stems from his personal encounter with the risen Christ on the Damascus road. This is the only clear explanation for so radical a conversion in his life. This christology, however, was already a part of the earliest Christian communities, evidence for which is seen in the numerous pre-Pauline sayings and motifs which are incorporated in his later letters. There is development over time, however, in Paul's conception of the geographical scope of his mission.

The subject matter of this book closely overlaps with that of Rainer Riesner's *Paul's Early Period: Chronology, Mission Strategy and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998). Indeed, Hengel expresses particular indebtedness to his fellow German's investigation into Pauline chronology. Hengel's own contribution is the greater attention he gives to the roots of Pauline theology. To see both of these mammoth works of German conservative scholarship in English translation, however, is of considerable value to future research into the early ministry and theology of Paul.

Repeatedly through the pages of this very readable account, Hengel is highly critical of the scepticism of the old Tübingen school which gives little credence to historical sources. It is unfortunate, however, that a monograph of such thoroughness, detail and length lacks a bibliography, a subject index and an index of ancient, non-biblical sources. These three shortcomings sadly restrict the full value which can be gained from such an extensive and valuable contribution of research.

Andrew D. Clarke, University of Aberdeen

**Richard N. Longenecker (ed.), *The Road from Damascus: the Impact of Paul's Conversion on his Life, Thought and Ministry*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, xvi + 253 pp, \$25.00/£16.99.**

The series of McMaster New Testament Studies provides a context for selected scholars to contribute papers addressing a New Testament theme which is of particular concern for Christians today. In this second volume in the series, eleven papers have been included which focus on the ways in which Paul's experience on the Damascus road may have influenced his subsequent theology and ministry. Some of the many issues which repeatedly surface through these essays include discussion as to whether Paul's experience should be described as a conversion or a call, whether it should be seen as atypical or normative for later Christians, and the extent to which Paul's theology was fixed from the moment of his conversion or underwent a development, whether minor or more radical, over subsequent years. This latter area is a particularly sensitive issue for conservative Christians who fear that talk of development implies that some of the later New Testament writings should be viewed as a correction of the naïveté of the earliest Christian writings.

The opening chapter reflects on the changing perception of the nature of Paul's conversion as it has been variously interpreted over the centuries in scholarship, literature, culture and art. Has Paul's particular experience been too readily interpreted in terms of an Augustinian-Lutheran crisis of conscience in which God's grace overpowered Paul's arrogance?

The remaining ten chapters consider individual elements of Paul's theology (and ministry): christology, eschatology, the gentile mission, justification, reconciliation, covenant, the Law, the Holy Spirit, women, and ethics (freedom). To what extent was Paul's perspective on these areas modified in the light of his Damascus road experience?

Although the Lukan and Pauline reflections on Paul's conversion differ significantly over what they consider important, the centrality of Christ in this moment of revelation is consistent across all the accounts. From this moment Paul affirmed all that the earliest believers had held true about Christ, although the demands of the gentile mission entailed a gradual modification or contextualization of some of the christological material. In the wake of his Damascus road experience, however, how did Paul respond to the 'delay' of the parousia; do his letters focus more on the first coming or the second coming of the Messiah; and did Paul's encounter with Jesus as Messiah signify the inauguration of a new age? Similarly, did Paul's concern for the gentiles emerge prior to, during, or after his conversion; and was it a rejection of Jewish particularism?

It is argued that Paul's understanding of justification by faith was already a fundamental part of his Jewish upbringing and identity. His experience on the road to Damascus signified, therefore, not so much God's acceptance of him and the resolution of a troubled conscience, but, rather, the realization that the privilege of relationship with God was not restricted to the nation of Israel. The Jewish understanding of justification by faith was not wrong; rather it was too narrow, or particularist. The origins of Paul's understanding of reconciliation may also hark back to Paul's Damascus road experience, which he regarded as God's action of reconciling an enemy to himself. These reflections on reconciliation are then substantiated for Paul by reference to both



the Isaianic Servant songs and Jesus tradition. Prior to his conversion Paul conceived the covenant to be ethnically circumscribed, where obedience to the law was incumbent on all ethnic Jews as the right response to God's covenant righteousness. After his conversion Paul seeks to redefine the boundaries of the covenant in terms of those who are of faith, regardless of ethnic identity, where *pistis Christou* is a reference to the 'faithfulness of Christ', as opposed to 'faith in Christ'. Also discussed is the degree to which Paul's post-conversion conception of the Mosaic Law was consistent with what he had formerly held.

Paul rarely speaks of the Holy Spirit when referring specifically to his own conversion. On the other hand he repeatedly associates the conversion of his addressees with their reception of the Holy Spirit, and then often identifies himself in such experiences. One implication which can be carried forward is that Paul regarded his own conversion in terms of reception of the Holy Spirit. That experience of the Spirit at conversion, however, should characterise all subsequent Christian living. In a similar way, the freedom which Paul experienced at his own conversion, clearly portrayed in Galatians, is something which should characterise all Christian living.

Also addressed within these chapters are the extent to which Paul's post-conversion views on women differed from those of contemporary Hellenistic Jews; whether his Christian theology favoured egalitarianism; and the extent to which patriarchal elements were culturally conditioned.

It is clear that within this volume a wide range of issues of Pauline theology and ministry are raised, but there is refreshingly no forced unanimity of theological perspective, and within its pages key debates, most notably on the 'new perspective', continue to be pursued. The downside is that only occasional instances of 'dialogue' between the contributors emerge through the course of the book. It may, of course, be that much dialogue took place in the process of compiling the essays, and elements of the fruit of this have been invisibly woven into the final fabric. Either way, this is not a significant detraction from what will be regarded as an important work, fully abreast of current scholarship, covering an especially topical subject.

Andrew D. Clarke

**Romano Penna, *Paul the Apostle: A Theological and Exegetical Study*. Volume 1, *Jew and Greek Alike*. Volume 2, *Wisdom and Folly of the Cross*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press/Michael Glazier, 1996. 325 and 287 pages respectively, paperback, \$34.95 each.**

**Calvin J. Roetzel, *Paul: The Man and the Myth* (Studies on Personalities of the New Testament; Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1998). 269 pp., hardback, \$34.95.**

**Ben Witherington III, *The Paul Quest: The Renewed Search for the Jew of Tarsus*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998. 347 pages, hardback, \$22.99.**

Romano Penna, Ordinary Professor of New Testament Exegesis at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, collects various of his essays from the past twenty years related to the apostle. The first volume consists of historical and exegetical essays. Alongside studies on Paulinism; the city of Rome, the Roman church, and Paul's attitude toward the Jews, there are exegetical treatments of the following passages:

Romans 1:18-2:29, 3:1-8, 3:8, 6:1-11, 8:32; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, 7:29-31, 13:1-13, 15:45-49; 2 Corinthians 4:7-5:10, and chaps. 10-13. The second volume is more thematically oriented and includes traditional exegetical-theological subjects (e.g., "Sin and Redemption," "The Blood of Christ," "Paul's Attitude Toward the OT," "Justification by Faith in Paul and James," "Law in Paul's Letters," "Pauline Morality") as well as articles on Pauline spirituality (e.g., "Laicity in Saint Paul," "Pauline Mysticism") and an appendix on "The 'Visio Pauli' and the Apocalyptic Ascents of the *Divine Comedy*."

Penna is excellent at presenting the status of pressing questions in NT studies. For example, What do we know about the Jews in Rome around the time of the writing of Romans (cf. esp. 1: 27-47), and, Who is Paul's foil in the argument of Romans (Jewish Christian advocates of Paulinism, rather than opponents, who have moved in too libertinistic a direction; cf. vol. 1, chap. 7)? Only a few minor errors mar these slightly revised articles (e.g., a missing umlaut [1:15, n.44] and missing closing parenthesis [1:188]) and the oral presentation form is preserved in one place (2:10). The translation is consistently lucid and unobtrusive, but the reader is given no knowledge of the original place and time of publication of the individual articles. Although the promised "organic structure" is hardly evident, serious students of Paul interested in a particular passage or theme will find helpful studies in these volumes from one both sympathetic to Christian faith and engaged in critical scholarship. They illustrate among other things a convergence of Roman Catholic and Protestant exegetical studies, and Protestant readers may be surprised at the serious interaction with Protestant exegetes alongside Catholic ones. Penna even defends Luther against facile Catholic charges of antinomianism from the past (2:129).

Calvin Roetzel, Arnold Lowe Professor of Religious Studies at Macalester College in Saint Paul, Minnesota, does not give us a "life of Paul" nor an attempt to reconstruct the apostle's theology. Rather this book is a reconstruction of "parts of [Paul's] image that usually fall in the shadows" (1); in particular, Paul the ascetic and the mythic Paul of the second and third centuries. It was Paul the semi-divine wonder worker, celibate, and martyr who was remembered in the following centuries, rather than the consummate theologian and proclaimer of justification by faith. Nevertheless, a number of more standard questions about Paul's life and thought-world are addressed in the early chapters. "The Early Paul" examines what we may know of Paul's childhood and upbringing. As in most of the book Roetzel is skeptical of the information given in Luke's Acts. Thus, Paul grew up in Tarsus rather than in Jerusalem (pace Acts 22:3) and was more influenced by Hellenism than is often recognized, which may explain, in part, his universalistic (i.e., pro-Gentile) outlook. This does not mean that Paul ever rejected Judaism, or being a Jew, but Paul's was a form of Diaspora Judaism which was strongly shaped by his later messianism.

The second chapter ("The Apostle to the Gentiles") looks at Paul's "call" to the Gentiles (not "conversion") and at some developing aspects of Paul's understanding of apostleship: revelation of Christ, founding churches, suffering, miracles, and preaching (here again Acts does not represent what Paul said). Chapter three ("The Letter Writer") gives an excellent survey of the form and function of Paul's letters. Chapter four ("The Theologizer") traces Paul's ad hoc responses to differing situations in 1 Thessalonians, 1 Corinthians, and Romans (with excursions on Galatians and 2 Corinthians). According

to Roetzel Paul did not start from a fixed or systematic theology, but had a few fixed presuppositions (e.g., God as the God of Israel) and theologized as necessary. Thus, for instance, in 1 Thessalonians Paul is silent on the implications of incorporating Gentiles into a fundamentally Jewish movement. In Galatians, on the other hand, nonmessianist Jews would seem to be disowned from the divine promises. In Romans he will wrestle further with the place of Jew and Gentile in the one people of God, ultimately leaving Israel's place "wrapped in a divine mystery" (130).

The final two chapters are the most novel and intriguing of the book. Chapter five ("The Model Ascetic") argues that Christian asceticism follows a trajectory from Jewish and Hellenistic models right through Paul on to the later centuries, rather than having to work its way around an essentially non-ascetic Paul. Although Paul allowed marriage in 1 Corinthians, celibacy was his own "better" way. "Thus, for Paul, marriage was an intermediate position between *enkrateia*, or self-control, and *porneia*, or immorality" (147).

Chapter six ("The Mythic Apostle") looks at the images of Paul the celibate, the miracle worker, and the martyr as they developed in the post-apostolic period. While many today wish to see a caricature of the apostle in later works such as *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*, Roetzel's own highlighting of these aspects of the apostle's career makes the answer more difficult. Although later writings do differ from the canonical portraits (e.g., where is the weak and suffering Paul of 2 Corinthians?), "they offer an imaginative and perhaps a credible interpretation of emphases within the Pauline letters themselves" (176). Building on his more detailed previous studies (e.g., *Jesus, Paul and the End of the World* [1992], *Paul's Narrative Thought World* [1994], *Conflict and Community in Corinth* [1995], *Grace in Galatia* [1998]) Ben Witherington III, Professor of New Testament at Asbury Theological Seminary, provides a view of Paul as a first-century Jewish convert to Christianity. For pastors and serious students of Paul who would like to know the impact of social-anthropological, rhetorical or narratological approaches on the understanding of the apostle this is a good place to start. The author writes for those needing some introduction to these (often complex) issues and the footnotes alert readers to starting points for study of a particular debate.

The first two chapters deal with first-century personality ("On Constructing An Ancient Personality") and with Paul's own sense of identity ("The Trinity of Paul's Identity"). Paul was a group-oriented Mediterranean person and should not be viewed as a self-made man of modern western individualism. Yet, within this context Paul was "a change agent, a deviant, a person swimming against the current of culture" (50). As to Paul's identity Witherington argues that we should stress the newness, or discontinuity. "In the end it is perhaps better to call Paul a Jewish *Christian* than a messianic *Jew*" (69; italics added). While acknowledging that Paul always remained a Jew, he was "converted" from Judaism (Roetzel says "called"). The third chapter ("Paul the Writer and Rhetor") details the type of training received in letter-writing and in public speaking by a person like Paul. In the fourth chapter Paul's major roles of prophet and apostle are sketched. Here, in exonerating Paul from the charge of being a false prophet, Witherington distinguishes between "possible" and "necessary imminence" in relation to Christ's return (136-42). I.e., Did Paul say Christ "may" or "will" return in the near future? If the former as Witherington argues, then Paul did not miscalculate the future and his statements still have considerable relevance for end-of-



the-millennium enthusiasts (though not quite what these last might envision).

Chapters five through eight deal with various aspects of Paul's ethical and theological thought-world. "Paul the Realist and Radical" (ch. 5) examines Paul's approach to social-ethical questions such as church and state, patriarchalism, and slavery. Witherington shows Paul's direction toward egalitarianism, though also acknowledging cultural limitations (174-76), i.e., Paul balanced pragmatism with revolutionary ideals. "Paul the Anthropologist and Advocate" (ch. 6) provides Paul's view of human nature (i.e., the meaning of "heart," "flesh," "body," etc.) and then moves to his view of Christians in community, especially the role of women in family and church. "Paul the Storyteller and Exegete" (ch. 7) focuses on the larger narrative or story-world underlying much of what Paul says and on the ways Paul uses the major repository of such stories, the Old Testament. Finally, "Paul the Ethicist and Theologian" (ch. 8) takes up the nature of Paul's ethical reasoning and reviews recent discussion of the "center" of Paul's theology. A summarizing chapter concludes the book, followed by an appendix on Pauline chronology, a bibliography, and author and subject indexes.

This volume is well-suited as a seminary textbook on Paul's identity and thought within his social context. It will be of less interest to the scholarly community since it, in large part, rehashes material covered in Witherington's earlier works. (This reviewer counted 84 footnotes referring the reader to these earlier works!) Witherington does a laudable job of taking sometimes very complicated developments in Pauline studies and condensing them to understandable summaries. For example, the treatment of advances in anthropological and rhetorical methods of interpretation will help those wishing to look into these issues. The constant references to earlier or later discussions of topics in the same volume (60 footnotes) are neither helpful (since no page numbers are given) nor necessary. The volume contains a few errata ("certain[ly]" [131]; German author and book title [133, n.4]; extra colon [136]; "dogs" are in "Philippi" not "Galatia" [161]; "would [have] remained" [261]; German titles [310, n.17]). A scripture index would have increased the usefulness of the volume.

Kent Yinger

**Bruce W. Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 289 pp., \$59.95.**

Winter uses first and early second century A.D. Greek, Jewish, and Christian sources related to Alexandria and Corinth to establish the point that the Second Sophistic did not begin in earnest in the second century A.D., but rather in the first century A.D. He then demonstrates that the sophistic movement provides a convincing background for 1 and 2 Corinthians, especially 1 Corinthians 1-4, 9, and 2 Corinthians 10-13.

Winter focuses Part I on evidence for the sophistic movement in Alexandria in the first century A.D. A first century student papyrus letter (*P. Oxy.* 2190) reveals a demand in Alexandria for declamation taught by the sophists. Dio of Prusa (*Or.*) describes sophists in first century Alexandria involved in public declamation and running schools. Philo (especially *Contempl.* 31) provides a critique of sophists and their educational system in first century Alexandria: 1) Whereas *paideia* was supposed to teach virtue, the sophists' lack of virtue promoted vice in their students; 2) rhetorical skills were not taught to present the truth through dialectic but rather to deceive; and 3) motivation was

financial gain and prestige rather than the welfare of the students.

In Part II Winter's surveys all the evidence for the sophistic movement in Corinth in the first and early second century A.D., including Epictetus of Hierapolis in Phrygia, Dio of Prusa, Plutarch of Chaeronea, and Saul of Tarsus. Epictetus' anti-sophistic polemic (*peri kallōpismou*) criticizes the sophists for emphasizing personal appearance rather than virtue, declaiming for show only rather than for teaching virtue, and pursuing praise. Dio of Prusa provides a critical picture of the intense rivalries and arrogance of the sophistic movement in Corinth in A.D. 89-96 (*Or.* 8). In his Corinthian oration (*Or.* 37), Favorinus of Arles demonstrates how much he and other sophists were praised and admired in Corinth in the early second century A.D. Herodes Atticus, a student of Favorinus, was a respected sophist in Corinth as attested by accolades on a statue to his wife and Philostratus' account of Herodes' life. Plutarch of Chaeronea notes the ambition, greed, and rivalries of sophists in Corinth.

Having established that sophists were prevalent in Corinth in the first century A.D., Winter explores Paul's relationship with the Corinthians in light of a sophistic background. From 1 Cor. 2:1-5 and 1 Corinthians 9 Winter argues that Paul adopted an anti-sophistic stance in his initial visit to Corinth in order to avoid being identified as a sophist in message or lifestyle. Unlike the sophists, he did not enter the city and establish his reputation as a speaker by an encomium to the city and a powerful declamation in hopes of garnering wealthy disciples. He preached by appeal to the power of God rather than conviction (*pistis*) derived from sophistic rhetorical techniques, and he worked hard with his hands to support himself rather than take support for instruction. However, the Corinthians adopted a sophistic conception of leadership and discipleship and suffered the inevitable rivalry entailed in such a conception. Apollos' more sophistic approach to preaching caused some Corinthians to follow him as disciples of a sophist and reject Paul who purposely did not measure up as a sophist (1 Cor. 1:10-12, 3:1-5; Acts 18:24-28).

Winter rightly asserts that 1 Corinthians 1-4 is not simply Paul's *apologia* for his ministry. Rather it is a critique of the Corinthians imposition of sophistic values and conceptions on church leadership and discipleship, particularly conceptions of status, imitation, and boasting. Paul challenges the Corinthians as disciples of the crucified Messiah to imitate his own imitation of the shame and suffering of Christ, not the mannerisms and rhetorical techniques of their sophists.

Winter argues that between the writing of the Corinthian letters the Corinthians recruited itinerant Jewish-Christian teachers trained in the sophistic tradition to instruct them. These teachers used key rhetorical categories from Paul's own critique of the sophistic tradition in 1 Corinthians 1-4 and 9 to attack his deficiencies as an orator. From a theology of weakness based on the paradigm of Christ, Paul responds that the Corinthians sophists are ignorant and foolish because they engage in comparison and boasting in status and achievement at the expense of each other. Paul boasts in his failures and hardships in order to parody the boasting of the Corinthian sophists and indict them (2 Cor. 11:22-12:13).

By demonstrating that the Second Sophistic was in bloom in Alexandria and Corinth in the first century A.D., Winter can show that the source of the division in Corinth was primarily sophistic, not theological or gnostic. He defeats the notion that the issues raised and the opponents faced by Paul are distinct in 1 Corinthians and in 2

Corinthians. The book is a model of clarity and readability. It makes a contribution to the study of the Second Sophistic, and greatly clarifies the nature of Paul's opposition in Corinth and the peculiarities of his response. The book must be consulted for a complete understanding of the Corinthian letters. Duane F. Watson, Malone College

**James D. Miller, *The Pastoral Letters As Composite Documents*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 93, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, hb., 214 pp. \$54.95.**

Miller offers an insightfully sustained argument that the Pastorals were not written by Paul or by a talented pseudonymist. He explains why no single author could have written these documents and then suggests that the best solution to the many riddles present by the Pastoral documents is that they were "composite documents." The Pastorals were produced by a group of editors or school of scribes "charged with the preservation and circulation of Pauline teaching and traditions" (145). Thus, the Pastoral Epistles were composite works that incorporated genuine Pauline notes written to Timothy and Titus. However, meshed into these genuine, brief notes are "blocks of non-Pauline materials" that were editorially woven into the documents over an extended period of time (151, 158). Hence, Miller postulates a third option in attempting to resolve the internal literary difficulties of style, content and structure presented by these Epistles.

In order to make his argument plausible, Miller reviews the authorship debate and shows how neither Paul nor a pseudonymist resolves the literary problems presented by these works. Then he offers some fresh insight into the literary environment from which the Pastorals emerged. This environment produced many "composite documents," within both Jewish and early Christian communities. The author presents a "compositional analysis" of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus. The monograph ends by reiterating the main concerns. Miller's work is an important contribution to by reiterating the main concerns. Miller's work is an important contribution to Pastoral studies and the literary environment of the first and second centuries.

If you are interested in exploring Miller's overarching concern of why these documents (the Pastorals) read the way they do, then you may find his argument a plausible solution. This is not a commentary, but instead a technical study concerning the composition of the Pastorals from a historical critical perspective. Ken Archer

**Andrew H. Trotter, *Interpreting the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, Books, 1997, 222 pp.**

This most recent addition to Baker's *Guides to New Testament Exegesis* series ably fulfills the stated goal of that series, namely to provide an introduction to appropriate methods of interpreting biblical representatives of a specific genre (in this case, Hebrews) based on, but pressing slightly beyond, Gordon Fee's outline in *New Testament Exegesis* (Louisville, KY: W/JKP, 1993). It attempts to provide neither a commentary on Hebrews, nor a survey of scholarship on Hebrews, but specifically an introduction to reading Hebrews. Part I, entitled "The Background of Hebrews,"



contains discussions of the original audience, date, authorship, genre, structure, textual variants; Part II, called "The Exegesis of Hebrews," moves into discussions of vocabulary, grammar, style, and theology.

The greatest strengths of Trotter's volume are to be found in his chapter on the vocabulary of Hebrews, which begins with an important theoretical discussion on how to avoid fallacious word studies and how to arrive at more reliable insights from lexicography. This is followed by a solid discussion of the author's coined words. The second high water mark is the chapter on Style, which introduces the reader to a host of rhetorical "figures of diction" (e.g., alliteration, anaphora, hyperbaton) and provides examples of how these figures are used by the author of Hebrews. That chapter concludes with an incisive and appropriate critique of Nigel Turner's attempts to define Semitic style and to find Semitisms in Hebrews. Trotter's discussion of the methods of Scriptural interpretation employed by the author of Hebrews is also very well done, especially as Trotter goes on to consider the question of the validity of modern readers applying the same methods to the reading of the Old Testament.

The book, however, is not without a number of problems as well, in terms both of omission and commission. As Trotter discusses the addressees and their situation, he makes the good point that the presence of so much material from the Old Testament cannot be used to demonstrate that the audience was predominantly Jewish since Gentiles, too, would have been familiar with the Septuagint. This is such a persistent misconception in treating Hebrews that Trotter would have done well to develop this point more fully, speaking specifically about how Gentile Christians would have been trained in their new faith chiefly on the basis of the Jewish Scriptures. More serious, however, are the difficulties in his attempts to delineate the audience as a particular sector of the Christian community which has itself split off from the larger group. 10:25 is made to serve this delineation, although that verse is more naturally read not as an indication of where the audience is located with regard to the larger church but as an indication that there are believers who are not coming out to the assembly where the addressees are hearing this letter read. Trotter corroborates this with a questionable mirror-reading of 5:11-14, a passage which upbraids the addressees for still being in need of basic instruction when they should by now be teachers of the faith. Trotter reasons that this letter cannot address the whole congregation, for they could not all be expected to be teachers (the very act of teaching implies another group of those who are to be taught). Though generally attentive to rhetoric in principle, Trotter here misses the probability noted by many commentators that 5:11-14 is an appeal to pathos, an attempt to rouse the hearers to acquit themselves by responding actively and decisively to the author's challenges. It is thus not an appropriate passage for direct mirror-reading into the situation and identity of the addressees.

While much of Trotter's discussion of the genre of Hebrews is strong, the section which attempts to squeeze Hebrews into the genre of the diatribe is unsuccessful. This is because Trotter's definition of what marks diatribe is so wide and generalized as to become meaningless. He appears to make no differentiation between general "reasoning by question and answer," a very common rhetorical technique, and that raising of hypothetical objections in the form of questions and debating with an imaginary conversation partner which are peculiarly characteristic of the diatribe (as seen in Epictetus' *Dissertations* or in Paul's Letter to the Romans). Trotter's suggestion that Heb

7:11 is such an objection is inaccurate. This verse does not offer an objection in the form of a question from an imaginary interlocutor (as does Romans 3:1, 3), but rather poses an argument in the form of a question in support of the author's thesis that perfection was not in fact possible through the mediation of the Levitical priesthood. That is, the author has already established the need for a new priesthood and draws a conclusion in Heb 7:11 about the weakness of the Levitical priesthood in the form of a question. Trotter also points to the presence of arguments "from the lesser to the greater" in Hebrews (notably in the question of 10:26-29) as signs that Hebrews shares in the form of the diatribe, but again that sort of argument is so basic to both Greco-Roman and Jewish logic that it is equally at home in the forensic speech or rabbinic midrash. That 10:26-29 is posed as a question likewise points to common rhetorical strategies rather than specifically to one rhetorical form.

Trotter provides a very handy table of textual variants, but the exegetical payoff is not consummate with the space it takes up. A few significant variants with more detailed discussion of those few variants (why one would favor one reading over another, what difference one reading really makes for the theological issues Trotter mentions too briefly) would have been more useful to students, who then could go to Metzger's *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* and continue the work for themselves better equipped for the task.

This reviewer is highly appreciative of Trotter's attempts to raise awareness of the usefulness of rhetorical analysis. I am left to wonder, however, why Trotter stops himself so short in this regard, preferring to dwell on rhetorical figures of diction (the ornamentation) rather than strategies of argumentation (e.g., discerning appeals to pathos, analyzing enthemes and other appeals to reason -- the sorts of investigations of rhetoric which may really bear exegetical fruit). This is all the more surprising in that Trotter acknowledges that "the subject is so essential to understanding Hebrews" (p. 165), which I take to apply to the larger picture of Greco-Roman argumentation and not merely to the figures of speech which even the rhetoricians relegate to the back of their textbooks (as in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*).

As an introduction to exegesis of Hebrews, the book basically persists in promoting a paradigm of interpretation which suggests that, if one concerns oneself with the words in the text long enough (vocabulary, grammar, style) and looks intently for the ideas contained in the text (theology), one will arrive at a sound interpretation of that text. It does not do enough to point the student to the world around the text -- strategies of persuasion being employed by the author to effect a goal in the audience's setting, the social and cultural world of the audience, the conversations with other texts present in Hebrews, and so forth -- wherein the text comes to life. Vernon Robbins has suggested that the exegetical enterprise, when done in its fullest scope, takes in the inner texture, intertexture, social and cultural texture, ideological texture, and sacred texture of a biblical text (*Exploring the Texture of Texts* [Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1996]; *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse* [London: Routledge, 1996]; see reviews in this issue); Trotter's volume proceeds as though inner and sacred texture were the main, and perhaps exclusive, areas of concern for the exegete. While, basically, he does very well with those two textures, I would urge the writer of a "guide to exegesis" to push beyond the narrow paradigm of grammatico-historical exegesis to include some of the rich dimensions of reading Scripture described above.

David A. deSilva

**R. P. Martin and P. H. Davids, Editors. *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997. 1289 pp. \$39.99.**

This volume is the third in IVP's emerging 8-volume *Dictionary of the Bible*, a series begun with *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* and *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. The fourth, *Dictionary of New Testament Backgrounds*, is scheduled to appear in 2000, with four volumes on the Old Testament following.

The *DLNTD*, as its name suggests, covers Acts (which was unable to fit either into "Jesus" or "Paul" volumes), and Hebrews through Revelation. Very wisely, the editors decided to extend this focus to include the writings of the apostolic fathers (Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, Hermas, and others) and other early Christian literature (e.g., the *Gospel of Peter*). This becomes an important bridge volume, then, from "New Testament" history to "Church" history, an introduction not only to the New Testament but also the wider literary world of early Christianity.

The volume contains over 230 articles, arranged alphabetically. As expected, there are "feature" articles on the texts themselves, most often provided by scholars who have already written respected commentaries on the text. The remainder of the entries are dedicated to issues of interpretation (e.g., "Old Testament in Revelation," "Jesus traditions,"), theological and cosmological concepts ("new birth," "eschatology," "repentance," "second repentance," "heaven, new heavens"), early Christian practice ("baptism," "lord's supper," "worship and liturgy"), Christ ("exaltation/enthronement," "Christology"), social, cultural and political realities ("priest," "slave, slavery," "magic," "Greco-Roman religions," "purity and impurity," "Qumran"), literary genres ("apocalypse," "letter, letter form") and many other topics ("Philo," "universalism," "ethics"). Most articles are arranged internally in terms of textual base, so that, for example, the article on "preexistence" first discusses the Hellenistic and Jewish backgrounds of the concept (giving many helpful references to primary sources), proceeds to discuss the appearances and significance of the topic in Hebrews, 1 Peter and Jude, the Johannine Epistles, Revelation, and finally the post-New Testament writings (Ignatius, Hermas, Justin, and 2 *Clement*). It is impossible in a review essay to give an adequate sense of the scope covered by this resource.

In the tradition of its predecessors, the *DLNTD* continues to bring the best of scholarship to the pastor, lay person, and seminarian. Some of the most respected names in evangelical scholarship have contributed to this endeavor: R. J. Bauckham, Craig Evans, Joel Green, Donald Hagner, Craig Keener, William Lane, I. Howard Marshall, Leon Morris, Willard Swartley, and Ben Witherington, to name a few. Though written from an evangelical perspective, the volume is thoroughly conversant with scholars both left and right of center, introducing students to the breadth of academic conversation.

Together with the first two volumes, the *DLNTD* forms a biblical reference work of the highest order. IVP is to be commended for its vision and for the excellence of these products; pastors and seminarians will be deeply enriched as they immerse themselves in the world this volume opens up so authoritatively and comprehensively.

David A. deSilva



Steve Gregg, ed., *Revelation, Four Views: A Parallel Commentary*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, xv + 528 pp. \$29.99.

Rather than promote one particular way of reading Revelation, this volume seeks to expose readers to a variety of interpretations of Revelation held by sincere Christians across many centuries and denominations. Gregg came to the project out of his own experience of teaching Revelation over many years, during which time he came to appreciate the merits of a number of different views and arrived at the conviction that responsible teaching required him to present alternatives to his own view in an atmosphere that would foster mutual respect among Christians of different hermeneutical and millennial stripes, as it were.

An introduction presents a number of critical issues concerning Revelation, among them the genre of the text, authorship, dating, and history of interpretation. This introduction concludes with an overview of the four approaches to Revelation treated in this book, namely the preterist (the prophecies of Revelation were fulfilled, in the main, in the first centuries AD), historicist (the prophecies of Revelation have been in the process of fulfillment throughout church history), futurist (the prophecies await fulfillment in the future), and idealist (the prophecies look not for specific fulfillment in time but speak to the ongoing moral, political, and religious conflicts characterizing the Christian era). The first half of this introduction is marred by a lack of acquaintance with the critical scholarship of recent decades. For example, Gregg simply assumes and perpetuates the idea that "like the other books of its genre [i.e., apocalyptic], Revelation was written during a time of intense persecution of believers" (p. 10, emphasis original). J. J. Collins, A. Y. Collins, and L. L. Thompson, however, have all raised cogent objections to this portrayal of the setting of Revelation in particular and apocalypses in general (see 4 *Ezra*, 2 *Baruch*, several strata of 1 *Enoch*, and the *Apocalypse of Abraham*). Revelation itself, if we are to take it seriously as "predictive prophecy" (p. 2), sees "intense persecution" only in the future (and, one should add, only if the churches follow John's advice rather than the accommodationist gospel of other groups such as the Nicolaitans). The brief history of interpretation and the presentation of the four approaches selected for this book, however, are quite well done.

The "commentary" follows, being organized in different ways for chapters 1-3, 4-19, and 20-22. The bulk of the commentary provides, in four parallel columns, discussions of views representative of the four approaches listed above. One may thus see at a glance the interpretation of the beast from the sea (Rev 13:1-10) among preterists, historicists, futurists, and idealists and compare them across the page. Chapters 1-3 are treated in a single "column," as it were, with important differences among the four camps being discussed in sidebars. The discussion of chapter 20 shifts to three columns — the amillennialist, premillennialist, and postmillennialist interpretations — and chapters 21-22 return to an integrated presentation. However much he or she might desire it, the reader of this "commentary" should not look for evaluations of the respective positions or even of different views held by individual interpreters within the same camp, since this would defeat the author's purpose of presenting these different approaches in a non-evaluative environment.

Gregg has thus provided a volume that is clearly more "open-minded" (p. 1) than most books on Revelation written from the perspective of "predictive prophecy"

overladen with commitments to particular doctrinal positions. It represents a very good first step in this direction and deserves to be commended for breaking through many narrow cinder blocks in the interpretation of this text that have been used to create walls of disrespect between sincere Christians. Nevertheless we can still hear the echoes created by these four voices as they resound off the ideological walls that contain them to the exclusion of other readings of Revelation. Here one arrives at a potentially troublesome drawback of the volume.

The book gives the impression of comprehensiveness, but I have reservations about this impression. This perception is made even stronger by Robert Clouse's foreword and by the "advance praise" page, both of which indicate that one will find in this book "the four major ways to interpret the Book of Revelation" or "the four major approaches." There are, however, equally significant approaches to the interpretation of the Apocalypse that do not fall within one of these four categories. The attempt to label "liberal works" (Walvoord's tendentious label, quoted by Gregg) as a combination of "idealist" and "preterist" (or late-date preterist) readings mistakes appearance for philosophy of approach. The work of L. L. Thompson, for example, does not share either the conviction of idealists or preterists; recent studies of visionary or apocalyptic rhetoric similarly operate from a fundamentally different model of reading an apocalypse, including Revelation.

Gregg succeeds, then, in making "every effort to be fair," but only among those views that stem from the same basic approach to "biblical prophecy." That is, Gregg treats chiefly those views which regard Revelation purely as "predictive prophecy" and which insist that every prophecy be fulfilled at some point (or, in the case of the idealist interpretation, as a vision that articulates general and eternally-valid principles). The assumptions that "biblical prophecy" (as opposed to non-canonical texts) is "predictive prophecy," and that the only "true prophecy" is the one that is confirmed by the working out of history, manifest themselves in numerous ways. Based on these assumptions, Gregg distinguishes Revelation sharply from every other apocalypse, asserting without any defense that it "actually is what it claims to be: an epistle in the apocalyptic mode that predicts events of the future" (p. 12), while other apocalypses only pretend to do so by writing past history in a prophetic mode. Where all its literary characteristics point toward commonality between Revelation and other apocalypses, the author's assumption about Revelation overrides any commonalities and asserts dissimilarity. The author also proceeds as if views are only viable where the nature of Revelation as "predictive prophecy" looking ahead to real fulfillment in history is preserved. Thus he asserts that the preterist view can only be tenable if Revelation was written before 70 AD, that is, before the historical events to which preterists often link the "prophecies" of Revelation.

Most problematic is the way in which Gregg links "a high view of the inspiration of Scripture" (p. 38) with his own basic premise that Revelation constitutes predictive prophecy with historical fulfillment. An alternative approach, well-represented among biblical scholars, is seen as stemming from a low view of inspiration which shows "no respect whatever for the Apocalypse as an inspired writing" and in which "an interpretation that has been falsified by history" is not "on that account inadmissible" (p. 37, using a quotation from Albertus Pieters, *The Lamb, the Woman, and the Dragon* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1937] to make this contrast evident). This is ideologically motivated and tendentious, to say the least: evangelical Christian readers and students

are, in effect, corralled toward agreeing with the author's basic premise out of a desire not to be associated with a "low view" of Scripture. The only refuge, in his model, for evangelicals with a high view of inspiration of Scripture is an idealist reading which, as already noted, is not truly the same as "higher-critical" readings.

But Providence has provided in Jonah an important case study in the nature of biblical prophecy, since Nineveh does not in fact fall in forty days as Jonah "prophesied" quite unambiguously and absolutely. Early Jews, indeed, were well aware of this prophecy proving "false" from the standpoint of historical fulfillment (see *Lives of the Prophets* 10.2-3, in which Jonah leaves his homeland to avoid the taunts of being called a false prophet). Jonah's proclamation shows that God's purposes for a word sent by God (thus fully "inspired") may be different from our assumptions about those words. Prophecy, like any word from God, is sent forth to achieve God's purposes: "my word ... shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it" (Is 55:11), and this purpose is clearly not always what it seems at face value. Jonah is a clear instance of "predictive prophecy" being spoken to effect a change of heart, proving true to God's purpose while proving untrue to rigid standards of historical fulfillment. It would not, therefore, be inconsistent with a high view of Scripture to read Revelation as a vision that seeks to effect a change of heart among Christians seeking roads to compromise and safety (as well as a confirmation of heart for those who seek to preserve their witness and obedience even in the face of mounting difficulties), and to see this as God's purpose for those visions rather than the supplying of a database from which future history (immediate, long-range, or distant future) should be read. In this regard, Gregg's otherwise "open-minded" book perpetuates unfortunate prejudices against evangelical readers of Revelation who do not share his basic assumption.

To be fair to the author, Gregg does note in the introduction that he does not consider "dramatic" interpretations of Revelation, since these invariably pertain to structure rather than an actual approach to interpretation of meaning, and "literary-analytical" studies (p. 3), which center mainly on identifying the sources of Revelation's language or on developing theories of literary composition. This disclaimer, however, has the effect of lumping together all those scholars who do not hold to the view that Revelation articulates purely "predictive prophecy" that will find historical fulfillment as "literary-analytical," which reveals a very narrow exposure to the exegetical study of Revelation that has been emerging during the last two decades. This term, as Gregg describes it, fits the work of R. H. Charles or H. Gunkel perfectly, but does scant justice to scholars who approach Revelation from sociology-of-religion or sociology-of-knowledge perspectives, rhetorical-analytical approaches, or even those who read it as closer kin to other Jewish apocalypses than Gregg wishes to allow (see, for example, the work of J. J. Collins, A. Y. Collins, David Barr, or L. L. Thompson).

In sum, then, Gregg's book is to be appreciated as a compendium of four kinds of interpretative approaches to Revelation, as long as it is understood that those four approaches are neither representative of the full spectrum even of evangelical scholarship, and certainly not of scholarship as a whole. It represents a very positive step forward from pushing one reading as "the" right one, and I admire Gregg's own testimony to personal growth in this area both personally and professionally as he teaches. Room must be made, however, for the theologically conservative who are, nevertheless, committed to a reading of Revelation informed by perspectives on



apocalyptic literature which distinguish it from "predictive prophecies" that are to be taken at face value.

David A. deSilva

**John D. Currid, *Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament*, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1997. 271 pp., pb, \$21.99.**

**James K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Traditions*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Pres, 1997. xix+244 pp., hb, \$35.00.**

A debate is raging among biblical scholars as to the historicity of Scripture. More foundationally, questions are raised concerning what constitutes evidence for reconstructing history. 'Minimalists' would hold that biblical accounts cannot be taken as true unless validated from extra-biblical sources. A more 'maximalist' position would hold that the Bible is to be valued as an important source for studying history, and is at times the sole source for some events mentioned in it. While outside validation or attestation would be useful, this view would hold that its lack should not throw uncorroborated statements concerning historical events into question, but should rather lead one to be thankful for the evidence which does exist in the Bible.

Both Currid and Hoffmeier, who teach at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, MS and at Wheaton College in Wheaton, IL, would find themselves methodologically more at home in the latter camp. Accepting the usefulness of Scripture as a historical source does not preclude bringing extra-biblical evidence to bear on its understanding and interpretation, and that is what these two authors do as regards evidence concerning Egypt.

Currid, who provides the more popular level book of the two, follows the guidelines of his title by looking at Egypt as it impacts the entire canonical spectrum of the OT. After introductory chapters discussing matters of history and method, as well as ancient Near Eastern cosmologies in general, he looks at Egyptian cosmogonies in particular, as well as other pentateuchally related matters as Potiphar, the episode of the serpent (Exod 7) and the ten plagues, the Ten Commandments, the Exodus and the bronze serpent. Of relevance to the historical books are studies of Egyptian influence, mainly military, on the monarchy, with special emphasis on Shishak. Currid also looks at Egyptian wisdom and prophecy as compared to those genres in the Bible.

With helpful illustrations, bibliography and detailed discussion, the general reader will find much of interest as well as challenge. It would serve as a good textbook in college and seminary, and should be on their library shelves.

As Hoffmeier's title indicates, his is a more specialized and technical study, though still accessible to the committed lay reader. His main question regards the compatibility of the Egyptian evidence with the picture presented in Genesis 39-Exodus 15, a question which he answers in the affirmative. His chapters include studies of recent scholarship on the early history of Israel, the debate about Israelite origins, a study of Semites, Joseph and the Israelites in Egypt, Moses and the Exodus, the Eastern Frontier Canal and the implications which its identification and study have for determining the route of the Exodus, other related matters of geography and toponym (place names), and the problem of the Red/Reed Sea. In his conclusions, Hoffmeier states: "The body of

evidence reviewed in this book provides indirect evidence which shows that the main points of the Israel in Egypt and exodus narratives are indeed plausible" (226). The search through this evidence leading toward this conclusion should fascinate readers of the book. Photographs and detailed footnote information will aid the scholar, while current interest in the subject by lay-people as well would suggest that this volume, as well as that by Currid, would find an eager readership in church libraries as well as more technical collections.

David W. Baker

**Eric M. Meyers, editor in chief, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East*, 5 vols., New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, under the auspices of the American Schools of Oriental Research, 1997, C. 2,600 pp., \$595.00.**

This massive work is a valuable resource, providing a survey of the field of Near Eastern archaeology at the dawn of the new millennium. The contributor list of twenty pages is evidence that the editors have drawn on the expertise of numerous authorities, listing those from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Syria, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and the US.

A helpful, one-page synoptic outline in the fifth volume shows the broader categories into which the entries fall, including: land and peoples- Syria-Palestine, Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Cyprus and the Aegean, Persia, Arabian Peninsula, Egypt, North Africa, Semitic East Africa, and Major Empires (ranging from the Hyksos to the Turkish caliphates); writing, language, texts- language families and languages, inscriptions and texts, writing and literacy, writing materials and technologies; material culture- subsistence, trade and society, built structures, artifacts and technologies; archaeological methods- types of archaeology, site typology, artifact analysis, dating techniques, provenience studies, field methods, allied sciences and disciplines (from paleozoology to computer mapping); and history of archaeology- theory and practice, narrative histories, organizations and institutions, and biographies. This is followed by an eight-page listing of individual articles under these major headings. This aid, along with the accompanying index, are vital for being able to find one's way through the great amount of material available.

Individual articles generally include a bibliography. Which is at times extensive. For biographical entries, this includes a list of relevant publications of the one discussed. Some articles are accompanied by black and white photographs, figures of such things as script samples, tables, line drawings of reconstructions, and maps. A set of twelve maps is also included in an appendix, as are chronologies, one in tabular and one in time-line form, and a list of Egyptian Aramaic texts. The latter supplements an entry on the topic, but it is unfortunate that the same could not be done for other textual corpora.

The articles themselves provide good entries into their subject. The nature of an encyclopedia precludes exhaustive treatments, but a fairly good cross-reference system, along with the accompanying bibliographies, allow those whose interest is piqued to pursue topics more fully.

It is important to note the work's title. It is not a biblical dictionary, nor even one

of biblical lands, though discussion of these topics is included. There is no exhaustive, separate index of ancient texts, so tracing discussion of points of biblical interest can be somewhat serendipitous. There are also no separate entries for some archaeological items of more directly biblical interest. For example, there is no entry, nor even an index item, concerning the Israelite Exodus from Egypt, and the entry under 'Sinai' discusses occupation evidence there chronologically, but makes no mention of Israel, most probably due to lack of artifactual evidence of their passage, which receives so much attention in the biblical text.

In light of these comments concerning the scope and interest of the work, students of the Bible will find material to pique their interest and help in their understanding. While not altogether sufficient to understand the Bible in its background, it is a necessary tool for this understanding, and should be in all serious academic libraries, at both religious and secular institutions.

David W. Baker

**Mark W. Chavalas, ed., *EMAR: The History, Religion, and Culture of a Syrian Town in the Late Bronze Age*, Bethesda, Maryland: CDL Press, 1996, pp. xvii + 179.**

The volume edited by Mark W. Chavalas reunites several papers presented at the symposium on the Syrian Bronze Age site of Meskene held at the annual meeting of the American Oriental Society Middle West Region between 20-21 February, 1994, at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL.

The first paper, "Emar and Its Archives" (pp.1-12), by Gary Beckman, analyzes Emar, a Syrian city under the Hittite domination, and its archives. The earliest reference to Emar dates to the 24th century B.C. (Ebla), and the 19th century B.C. (Mari). The Late Bronze city was occupied for 150 years until its destruction in 1187 B.C. Except for an Old Babylonian document (*Emar* 6,536), all the Emar tablets date to the Late Bronze Age (14th- 12th centuries B.C.). Most of them were written in a Peripheral Akkadian dialect replete with West Semitic forms. A small number of documents were composed in Sumerian, Hittite, and Human.

Wayne T. Pitard's "The Archaeology of Emar" (pp.13-23) is an archaeological survey of the Late Bronze city of Emar. The excavations were done by a French team under the guidance of Jean Margueron between 1972 and 1976. Among the findings: the remains of a palace; a pair of temples dedicated to Aštar and Baal, respectively; the Temple M<sub>1</sub> dedicated to an unidentified deity, <sup>d</sup> NIN.URTA, and presided by the "diviner"; a number of private houses with a three-room ground floor. Whereas political and residential architecture shows a Hittite influence, the temples follow a Syrian style.

The third contribution, "Who Was the King of the Hurrian Troops at the Siege of Emar?" (pp.25-56), by Michael C. Astour, focuses on one episode in Emar's history. The author suggests that Emar 6, 42, "the king of the troops of Hum-land mistreated Emar," refers to the siege of Emar under Tukulti-Ninurta I who fought with Arnuwandaš III of Hatti in the thirties of the 13th century B.C. The king of the Hurrian troops who attacked 2 Emar was Qibi-Aššur, "vizier (and) king of Hanigalbat," at that time a Hurrian state under the Assyrian control.

In "Family Values on the Middle Euphrates in the Thirteenth Century B.C.E." (pp. 57-79), Gary Beckman discusses three types of Emar's records: adoptions, marriage



arrangements, and testaments. The welter of detail in Beckman's contribution points to the preeminence of family life at Emar. Thus, the adoptions were adapted to include other aspects of social life (e.g., indebtedness, slavery), the marriages had an inter-family character, and the making of the testaments was concerned with the preservation of the family's wealth.

Daniel Fleming, "The Emar Festivals: City Unity and Syrian Identity under Hittite Hegemony" (pp.81-121), discusses four types of festivals: the installation of the high priestess *NIN.DINGIR* (Emar 6, 369); the installation of the *maš'artu*-priestess (Emar 6, 370); *zuku* (Emar 6,373) the only calendric festival; the *kissu* festivals (Emar 6, 385-388). The Syrian identity, so obvious in Emar's festivals, was never stifled by the Hittites who promoted a religious tolerance in dealings with the defeated populations.

"Care of the Dead at Emar" (pp.123-140), by Wayne T. Pitard, treats five of Emar's texts concerning the care of the dead and three legal documents from Nuzi. His analysis argues against identifying *ilāni*, household deities/patron gods of the family, with *etemmu* "ghosts" (Nuzi) or *mēū* "dead" (Emar), based simply on the association of these terms. The evidence itself goes against the deification of the dead at Emar: none of the verbs (*kunnū* "to properly attend to"; *nubbū* "to invoke"; *palāhu* "to serve, honor") accompanying this pair have meanings exclusively or predominantly associated with the dead.

"The Gods and the Dead of the Domestic Cult at Emar: A Reassessment" (pp. 141-163), by Brian B. Schmidt, is an assessment of the scholarship treating Emar's mortuary rituals. As does the foregoing paper, the author here deals with the same problem of the deification of the dead. The evidence from Nuzi and Emar rejects any equation between *ilānu* and *mēū* (Emar) or *etemmu* (Nuzi). Moreover, the presence of *kunnū* "to invoke" points to a commemorative rite rather than to summoning the deified dead to a blessing apparition. An excursus on deification of the dead in ancient West Asia (Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Syria) wraps up this final contribution.

The volume ends with a "Select Emar Bibliography" (pp.165-172) and an "Index" of personal names, toponyms/ gentilics, topics, and terms (pp.173-179).

Eugene Pentiuc, Holy Cross School of Theology, Brookline, MA

**Craig A. Evans & Stanley E. Porter, eds, *New Testament Backgrounds: A Sheffield Reader*, The Biblical Seminar 43, Sheffield: Academic Press, 1997, pp. 335, \$19.95.**

This volume is the forty-third in the Biblical Seminar series. It collects what the editors believe to be the best articles on the topic of New Testament backgrounds published in the first 50 issues (1978-93) of *Journal for the Study of the New Testament (JSNT)*.

The essays are: "Hostility to Wealth in Philo of Alexandria," by T. Ewald Schmidt (pp.15-27); "The Paradox of Philo's View on Wealth," by David Mealand (pp.28-32); "A Man Clothed in Linen: Daniel 10.5-9 and Jewish Angelology," by Christopher Rowland (pp.33-45); "The Lamb of God in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*," by J.C. O'Neill (pp.46-66); "The Apocalypses in the New Pseudepigrapha," by Richard Bauckham (pp.67-88); "David Daube on the Eucharist and the Passover Seder," by Deborah Bleicher Carmichael (pp. 89-108); "The Sabbath in the Synoptic Gospels," by

Herold Weiss (pp.109-23); "Popular Prophetic Movements at the Time of Jesus: Their Principal Features and Social Origins," by Richard A. Horsley (pp.124-48); "Streams of Tradition Emerging from Isaiah 40.1-5 and their Adaptation in the New Testament," by Klyne R. Snodgrass (pp.149-68); "Jesus as Mediator," by D.R. DeLacey (pp. 169-89); "χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος (John 1.16): Grace and the Law in the Johannine Prologue," by Ruth B. Edwards (pp.190-202); "The βασιλικός in John 4.46-53," by A.H. Mead (pp.203-06); "Hellenistic Parallels to the Acts of the Apostles (2.1-47)," by Pieter W. van der Horst (pp.207-19); "Hellenistic Parallels to Acts (Chapters 3 and 4)," by Pieter W. van der Horst (pp.220-29); "Moses Typology and the Sectarian Nature of Early Christian Anti-Judaism: A Study of Acts 7," by T.L. Donaldson (pp.230-52); "The God-Fearers: Some Neglected Features," by J. Andrew Overman (pp.253-62); "*Onesimus Fugitivus*: A Defense of the Runaway Slave Hypothesis in Philemon," by John G. Nordling (pp.263-83); "The Pragmatics of Politics and Pauline Epistolography: A Case Study of the Letter to Philemon," by Andrew Wilson (pp.284-95); "and "Confluence in Early Christian and Gnostic Literature: The *Descensus Christi ad Inferos* (Acts of Pilate 17-27)," by R. Joseph Hoffman (pp.296-311). The book closes with indexes of references and modern authors.

The volume serves two purposes: (1) to assist scholars who wish to keep up on developments outside their area of specialist research or who have been away from a topic for a period of time and wish to re-enter the discussion; and (2) to serve as a textbook for undergraduates, seminarians, and even graduate students.

Eric James Gréaux, Sr., Shaw University Divinity School, Raleigh, North Carolina

**Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches, The Family, Religion, and Culture*. Louisville: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1997, 329pp.**

This book is part of a series of books entitled *The Family, Religion, and Culture*. It seeks to provide comprehensive studies on the family in ancient Israel and early Christianity with the hope of bridging the gap to the American family of today. This particular book looks at the various NT teachings on the family in light of the social and cultural context of the Greco-Roman world.

In Part one, *Material and Social Environment of the Greco-Roman Household*, the authors look at archaeology and describe the housing situation in such places as Ephesus, Palestine, Pompeii and Herculaneum. Cultural anthropology is addressed in chapter two in terms of the way people interacted with one another. Topics of honor and shame, gender, and kinship are briefly discussed. Chapter three addresses the social world of that time in terms of such things as gender roles and responsibilities, marriage, education, slavery, children, and family religion.

Part two, *Early Christian Families and House Churches*, deals in more detail with topics such as social location, gender roles and marriage, education, slavery, and family life. Relevant NT texts as well as other types of literature pertaining to the subject matter are dealt with in a clear, readable fashion. Endnotes are provided in the back for those desiring to do further study. A glossary of basic terms is also provided. This book will be an excellent resource for students, pastors, or anyone interested in understanding

the world of the first century.

Melissa Archer

**Peder Borgen and Søren Giversen, eds., *The New Testament and Hellenistic Judaism*, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997. (First printed by Aarhus University Press, Aarhus, Denmark, 1995)**

This is a collection of papers given at a conference at Aarhus, Denmark, in 1992. It was originally edited by Peder Borgen then completed by Søren Giversen. This volume demonstrates that the study of Hellenistic Judaism is now a mainstream approach to NT background studies. This is a remarkable feat for a discipline which hardly existed before this century.

The opening papers are centered on Hellenistic Judaism. Giversen's contribution is a short but worthwhile examination of the covenant theme in Barnabas. The next paper by Lars Hartman would have been a better opening chapter because it provides a useful overview of the extent of Hellenistic Judaism. It also looks at the way the OT was used as a basis for ethics and teachings about eternal reward in Hellenistic Judaism. Nikolaus Walter then helps to put Hellenistic Judaism in a historical context by pointing out that Jews in Alexandria already demonstrated at least two centuries of Hellenistic education before the time of the NT, as seen in the production of the Septuagint and the Sibylline Oracles. He finds it ironic that much of this culture was valued and preserved only by Christendom. Marius de Jonge examines this Christian transmission, arguing that the Christian scribes probably were largely faithful to the original because they also succeeded in transmitting the Septuagint without changing it.

Four Gospel studies follow. James H. Charlesworth looks at the healing of Bartimaeus and especially his appeal to the 'Son of David', which he says referred to the reputed powers of Solomon for healing and exorcism. Adela Yarbro Collins argues that the resurrection was an original part of the earliest Gospel traditions, pointing out that physical resurrection of a man who gained divine status was common in Hellenistic sources. Aage Pilgaard reexamines the pre-Christian concept of *theios aner* which Bultmann and others regarded as a model for the development of Christology. He doubts that this concept could have developed into Christology without the added concept of an eschatological Son of Man. Johannes Nissen finds Jewish and Hellenistic parallels for all aspects of the love command in the gospels. The only aspect which he finds unique is the context of these commands in a new community where the love command in the gospels. The only aspect which he finds unique is the context of these commands in a new community where the love command becomes practical.

The volume ends with six Pauline studies. Peder Borgen finds it significant that Philo regarded Hagar as fleshly, and nowhere compares Hagar with the Sinai covenant. He concludes that Paul deliberately used this figure to suggest that the old covenant is like slavery to the flesh. Karl Gustav Sandelin traces the sacramental language in 1 Cor. 10 to the OT and Hellenistic Jewish literature. He suggests that it should be read as Paul's warning against participating in pagan practices. Per Jarle Bekken finds that the exegesis of Deut. 30:12-14 in Romans 10 follows accepted techniques and forms found in Philo and Baruch. Niels Hyldahl looks for the reason Paul wrote the Corinthian correspondence. He finds a crisis so serious that Paul would have had to expel a large



proportion of the church, if he visited in person, or else he would lose his authority completely. Niels Willert seeks the background of the so-called peristasis or hardship catalogues. Instead of the Hellenistic Jewish background suggested by Bultmann and the OT background suggested by others, he prefers to see the gospel passion traditions as the underlying model. Finally, Ole Davidsen looks at the Adam-Christ typology in a narrative study of Romans.

This volume is a collection of disparate papers which provide a wide-ranging insight into how Hellenistic Jewish literature is being used to open up the New Testament. Some papers are tendentious and some may become seminal, and they are mostly good examples of how to read the New Testament in the context of one of the worlds it originally inhabited. David Instone Brewer, Tyndale House, Cambridge

**Roman Garrison, *The Graeco-Roman Context of Early Christian Literature*, Journal for the Study of New Testament supplement series 137, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997, hb., 123 pp. \$35.00.**

Garrison argues that the New Testament and early Christian literature must be understood in the context of the literary and cultural world of the Graeco-Roman era. In his collection of investigative essays he explores the same significant parallels found in Hellenistic literature and early Christian literature. Garrison's examination of selected literary works by early Christians like Paul, Luke, Polycarp and Clement demonstrates that these authors utilized important Hellenistic cultural concepts, themes, symbols and terminology. Thus, Hellenistic culture influenced and shaped their works. This is not intended to be an exhaustive study of the impact of the Graeco-Roman world upon early Christian literature, but it is a helpful introduction.

Ken Archer

**Joan B. Taylor: *The Immerser: John the Baptist within Second Temple Judaism. Studying the Historical Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997. Pp. xvi+360. ISBN 0-8028-4236-4. \$30**

Joan B. Taylor, lecturer in religious studies at Waikato University in New Zealand, here presents a competent and highly serviceable historical treatment of John the Baptist. At present, her book is probably the best work of its kind available in English.

After a brief introduction to the biblical and extra-biblical sources, her treatment divides into six main chapters: (1) John's ascetic, quasi-Nazirite lifestyle and the question of his relationship with the Essenes (there was none); (2) his baptism as rooted in purity halakhah and conditional on prior repentance (rather than as a symbolic initiation rite); (3) his moral teachings and prophecies of imminent judgement by one who was to come; (4) his (predominantly positive) relationship with the Pharisees; (5) the nature of opposition to him and reasons for his execution (criticism of Antipas combined with the acquiescence of the Jerusalem establishment); and finally (6) his relationship with his disciple Jesus who continued his message (read 'against the grain' of what Taylor sees as the NT's defensive and apologetic treatment). The book ends with a useful and compact conclusion, a reasonable bibliography and indexes of names

(very patchy), subjects and ancient sources.

Taylor's volume, the second in a promising new series edited by Bruce Chilton and Craig Evans, is on the whole a refreshingly thorough and well-documented treatment of both primary and secondary literature, with excellent insights on subjects such as John's diet, dress, and views of purity. There is good critical interaction with important recent works like those of R.L. Webb, J.P. Meier and R.A. Horsley. Perhaps most innovative and interesting is her theory that Mark 9.11-13 shows Jesus to have interpreted John in the light of a 'suffering Elijah' tradition, which he adapted after John's death to interpret his own ministry (e.g. pp. 286, 315). One may not in the end agree with this, or with her chronology of dating John's death to A.D. 33/34 (and the crucifixion correspondingly later). Nevertheless, the book offers plenty of good interaction with the primary sources on which an assessment of the author's theories will need to be based.

Dr. Taylor is in general a reliable guide on this subject, although there are exceptions. Her grasp of the redaction history of Qumran documents struck this reader as wobbly (e.g. p. 28), her assertion of a dichotomy between inward and outward cleansing in IQS 3 (pp. 78-80) and John (p. 98) as forced, and her denial that 'initial immersion' is 'initiatory' (p. 81) as reminiscent of Alice in Wonderland. On a significant point of detail (p. 59), Taylor's discussion of purity also confuses the rabbinic *halakhah* of menstruation (*niddah*) with that of gonorrhea (*zabim*). Typographical errors are mercifully few, a rare merit nowadays.

A certain 'curate's egg' quality emerges in comparing some of the chapters, which show signs of having undergone quite different processes of composition. For example, the chapter on John's relationship with the Pharisees devotes a prolix 30 pages to a needlessly tedious discussion of the Pharisees. Chapter 2 on 'Immersion and Purity', by contrast, stands head and shoulders above the rest as an incisive and informative treatment; the Preface makes it clear that this has had the benefit of extensive scholarly critique and discussion.

Although at 360 pages this is not a slim treatment, greater conciseness on subjects such as the Pharisees might have left space for a welcome discussion of several other issues. These include the NT claims of John's priestly descent and family connections with Jesus, and also traditions of his possible links with Samaria, Galilee or the Golan (a little hastily despatched on p. 47 n.59 and p. 249 n.71). Similarly, readers will learn little or nothing from Dr. Taylor about the image of John in early Jewish Christianity, Gnostic and Mandaean groups; indeed she tends to underrate the Baptist's ongoing influence on various groups in the later first century, without which the implied polemic against his disciples in the Fourth Gospel (and Acts 19) is incomprehensible. Remarkably, the only insight offered on Jesus' baptismal vision of the Spirit 'as a dove' is the author's own experience of being once set upon in Jerusalem by a particularly feisty member of that species (*sic*, p. 274). Leaving aside the more mind-boggling implications of this anecdote, the admittedly difficult motif of the dove might, for example, have been usefully explored in Jewish allegorical treatments ranging from first-century texts like Ps.-Philo 39.5 and 4 Ezra 2.15; 5.26 to Septuagintal, Targumic and midrashic interpretations of the Psalms (e.g. 56.1; 68.13) and of the Song of Songs (2.14; 5.2; 6.9).

Contrary to the editors' claim that this otherwise promising new series will

remedy the neglect of primary and secondary literature in some current treatments of Jesus, Dr. Taylor offers no history of research and shows only minimal interaction with the non-English works listed in the bibliography (as indeed a number of listed English works are never cited). And although by comparison with other early NT topics the pertinent secondary literature on John the Baptist is not vast, Taylor misses a significant number of continental treatments altogether (e.g. J. Daniélou 1964, J. Ernst 1994, M. Reiser 1990 (E.T. 1997), H. Stegemann <sup>4</sup>1994, A. Schlatter 1956, M. Stowasser 1992, W.G. Kümmel 1974).

Finally, students assigned this work as a textbook should nevertheless be encouraged to note a certain methodological naïveté in the overall argument. Although Dr. Taylor strenuously (and, on the whole, successfully) pursues her project as a quest for 'the historical John the Baptist', she offers no hint of an acknowledgement that such a quest might be subject to some of the same hermeneutical vagaries that have long afflicted the study of historical Jesus. Simply to claim that one's aim is to rescue 'the real John' (so e.g. p. 12) from under smothering layers of Christian propaganda must surely be either naïve or devious. As it happens, the attentive reader cannot fail to notice from the outset Dr. Taylor's own driving assumption that the NT appropriation of John as a forerunner is seriously false and misguided: the evangelists' 'defensive, apologetic tone' (p. 320) is intended only to 'explain him away' (p. 4).

At the end of the day, of course, neither the evangelists nor Dr. Taylor interpret the inevitable ambiguities of history without bias, *sine ira et studio*; the main difference between them is that the former openly acknowledge their presuppositions. It remains a fact that John the Baptist pointed forward to a decisive eschatological figure who was soon to follow him, and that the early followers of his disciple Jesus took his prophecy seriously. To say they misunderstood John (though acknowledging his doubts about Jesus, Matt. 11) is at once to say they misunderstood Jesus: for if John was not the forerunner, then neither was Jesus the One who was to come. To say the evangelists suppress John or explain him away is not only to trivialize the evangelists' complex picture of him, but also to make a nonsense of the ancient church's well-attested veneration of him in his own right. As is strikingly illustrated in Grünewald's Isenheim altarpiece and similar Christian paintings, the truth or falsehood of the apostolic view of John depends in the end on the truth or falsehood of the apostolic view of Jesus.

Markus Bockmuehl, University of Cambridge

**Petr Pokorný, *Jesus in the Eyes of His Followers: Newly Discovered Manuscripts and Old Christian Confessions*, North Richland Hills, Texas: BIBAL Press, 1993, 100 pp. + x. n.p.**

Professor of New Testament at Charles University in Prague, Petr Pokorný here sets out in sharp relief his recent study of Christology (see his *The Genesis of Christology*; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1987) in an evolutionary and developmental manner: after shaping the discussion in light of early Christian confessions (e.g., 1 Cor. 15:3b-5 -which he calls the "Formula of Faith"), Pokorný analyzes Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom, his status as a Prophet and his status as Messiah before moving on to see how Easter shaped by interpretation the original outlines of Jesus' mission and



ministry. The task is noble though I am less than convinced that he has provided either broad outlines of a new view or a logically compelling case for the smaller points made. In addition, the book suffers from strikingly poor English and erratic spellings (e.g., pp.51 ["monofysitist"], 53 ["post-mortal" seems to be used for "post-mortem"], 54 ["substitutive" instead of "substitutionary"], 63 ["then" is used for "than"] and he likes the word "messianity").

After exegeting 1 Cor. 15:3b-5 responsibly, the author provides a brief summary of the history of research into the issue of the development of Christology in earliest Christianity. Oddly, he concludes with the literary approaches of A.N. Wilder and V.K. Robbins (whose lines of thinking he never again uses) and argues that this approach "strengthened confidence in the reliability of Jesus [*sic*] tradition and indirectly initiated a series of christological projects based on the teaching of earthly [*sic*] Jesus and his activity, often called the 'Third Quest for Historical [*sic*] Jesus'" (p.21). To my knowledge, the literary approach has neither strengthened confidence in the historical reliability of the Jesus traditions (since it shows almost no interest in such a question) nor has it spawned the Third Quest, whose decisive impulses came from stubborn historical questions fashioned by such people as G.B. Caird and B.F. Meyer as well as the massive industry of investigating Judaism (which got its impulse from the pioneering work of W.D. Davies when he argued that Paul got his ideas from Judaism, not the Greco-Roman ideologies; see his *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*). The method which he adopts, however, ante-dates the Third Quest and is nearly identical to the method of Norman Perrin.

His analysis of Jesus is unexceptionable but generally accurate. But for some reason he nearly forgets the bases on which he constructs NT christology for as he proceeds through the various christologies of the NT he simply fails to make connections back to the Jesus traditions. For Pokorn'y, Easter is the decisive impulse for the emergence of higher and more synthetic christologies; the previous christologies (e.g., Wisdom, Son of Man) are taken up and lodged in a larger framework as a result of Easter. He shows some interesting connections with larger frameworks in his brief survey of titles but it is especially in his study of Paul and Mark that he shows the impact of Easter on creating a larger synthesis of christological categories. For example, Pokorn'y shows how a "divine man" miracle christology was absorbed by Mark's post-Easter interpretation into a larger apocalyptic synthesis. Easter surely played the role Pokorn'y envisions for the development of early Christian christology and the general method he employs, moving from Jesus to the later Christian theologians, surely deserves further implementation.

Scot McKnight, North Park University

**Geoffrey Wainwright, *For Our Salvation: Two Approaches to the Work of Christ*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/London: SPCK, 1997, 186 pp., \$18.00, pb.**

Geoffrey Wainwright is a British Methodist theologian who has taught in the USA for many years. In this book he has brought together two series of lectures given at various institutions. The first set explores the different ways in which Jesus Christ comes to his people through the Word. Wainwright is interested in the uses of the different senses as means of communication, and he develops the ways in which touch,

taste and smell are used alongside listening and seeing. The result is an intriguing survey of the modes of apprehension of the revelation of Christ as they are found in Scripture and in the history of worship. The second set of lectures explores the concept of the threefold work of Christ as prophet, priest and king, examining the history of its usage and then analyzing each of its uses in five ways: christological, baptismal, soteriological, ministerial and ecclesiological. The freshness of the book lies in the breadth of knowledge of Christian theology and liturgy which is presented in a very readable and attractive manner. The author's style tends to be analysis and description of the material rather than argument. He writes as a Methodist, conscious of his heritage, but also as one who has learned from other traditions and is especially concerned for the ecumenical nature of the church. So he is able to show how the evangelical understanding of the gospel can profit from attention to the liturgy of the catholic tradition and thus be presented in a more comprehensive way. Methodist theology generally feels itself closer to Luther than to Calvin, and it is particularly good to see a Methodist here making good use of Calvin. Wainwright is concerned to see what he calls 'classic Christianity' thriving over against any liberal or modernist watering down of our Reformed and Catholic heritages. Here is an intriguing combination of these two elements by a master of historical theology. This is heart-warming reading.

I. Howard Marshall, University of Aberdeen

**N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996, xxi + 741 pp., cloth, \$65; paper, \$41.**

This is a big book—in every way. It is very long (too long!) and yet on its own admission fails to get in everything the writer intended to say. It addresses a great theme, the message and aims of Jesus of Nazareth, and does so in a way that relates Jesus both to his Jewish roots and to the Christian movement that sprang from his life. Wright sees history writing as the search for a large hypothesis that seeks to answer the big questions, and whether or not you agree with him, you will surely agree that he has asked the right questions and made an inspiring attempt to answer them. He is also very readable, full of vivid phrases, suggestive metaphors and sharp asides, always accessible, so that it might fairly be said of him that his pen is like the tongue of a ready preacher! To change the picture, this book is a mighty symphony, magnificent in conception and gloriously full of singable tunes.

The book is in three parts. The first addresses the question of whether the Question of the Historical Jesus is legitimate, possible, and how it should be pursued. Wright shows that orthodox Christianity has been better at answering the question, Why did Jesus die, than the question, Why did Jesus live? He gives an illuminating sketch of the Quest in this century, arguing that the choice is still between Wrede and his followers (we can know almost nothing about Jesus), and Schweitzer (Jesus is an apocalyptic Jewish prophet). Of the two, Wright opts firmly for the latter, with the important correction that apocalyptic does not refer to the End of the World, but to a coming national crisis of world-shattering magnitude. He argues persuasively that history cannot be done by searching for authentic sayings and counting beads, but by

constructing hypotheses that will account for the facts of history as we have them, and answer five key questions: How does Jesus fit into Judaism as we know it from the ancient sources? What were Jesus' aims? Why did Jesus die? How and why did the early Church begin? And, Why are the Gospels what they are?

The second part, entitled the Profile of a Prophet, shows that Jesus makes sense within first century Judaism not as a teacher of subversive wisdom but as a prophet, in the line of Israel's prophets, announcing the imminent fulfilment of Israel's deepest longings - the return from exile, the defeat of evil and the return of YHWH to Zion - inviting and welcoming his fellow Israelites to share in the coming kingdom, but also challenging and summoning them to turn from the false road of violent nationalism and join him in a new way of being Israel. Like Isaiah, he announced the end of exile and the return of the King; like Jeremiah, he warned that armed resistance was no way to bring in God's reign and would lead instead to the destruction of Jerusalem. The repentance Jesus spoke of was thus a change of political outlook behavior, and the forgiveness he offered was national liberation and the rebirth of Israel to be the light of the world.

The third part addresses the Aims and Beliefs of Jesus - if that was his message, how did he think the kingdom would come, and what was his own part in bringing it about? Jesus saw himself as the Messiah, the king who represented and embodied his people, whose destiny it was to fight the battle against the forces of evil and set his people free, but he differed fundamentally from his contemporaries in how he saw this battle was to be fought. Rather than raising an army and driving the Romans out of the country, he saw it as his calling to draw down on himself the judgement of God which the Roman armies represented and to die on behalf of the nation. Only so could the Satan be defeated, only so could Israel become what she was meant to be, and only in this way would the ancient hope of YHWH returning to Zion be fulfilled. What is impressive is the way Wright has been able to bring together two things usually put asunder, Jesus' nonviolent stance and his vicarious death. Jesus is neither the Savior of the World who happened to be a pacifist, nor the teacher of an exalted Ethic who happened to get killed, but someone whose rejection of violence was the cause of his death and means of his Atonement.

But what difference did it all make? Jesus died. Caiaphas and Pilate and their successors lived and reigned, and in the end the city was destroyed anyway. Wright has run out of space! He sketches an answer to this question in five pages, but it is hardly satisfactory. His answer, of course, focuses on the Resurrection, but it seems to me a serious weakness in the book that this vital topic has to be left for another volume. Wright carries me with him all the way until he starts talking about the 'Return of the Lord to Zion', which he apparently identifies with the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem. But surely this can only be so if the Resurrection is included as well as the Cross? Surely then, and then only, is the kingdom seen to have come in power? Surely the Cross is no victory without the Resurrection and all that flowed from it?

In short this is a great book, full of insights and ideas that there is no space to do justice to in a brief review, but in the end the subject matter defeats the author's attempt to deal with it in one volume. There was perhaps an alternative strategy. At the risk of sounding like a music critic telling Beethoven that the Ninth Symphony is a magnificent work, but we could do without all that singing at the end, I suggest Wright would have



done better to write one book on the Prophet and his Message containing Parts 1 and 2 (474 pages, no mean feat in itself), and write another on the Aims and Achievement of Jesus to include the present Part 3 and that book which, like its subject matter, the Resurrection, we eagerly await. R. Alastair Campbell, Spurgeon's College, London

**J. H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Rule of the Community. Photographic Multi-Language Edition*, New York: Continuum, 1996, 148 pp. \$100.00.**

*The Rule of the Community* (1QS) was one of the first four Dead Sea Scrolls to be discovered in 1947. As a text originally composed by the Qumran community (rather than a biblical text or a writing known from outside the community), the *Rule* gives us precious, firsthand information about the religious and social ethos of the sect, as well as a window into the process for joining oneself to the sect and the rules by which the community life was governed. From this text we learn of the community's strict dualism, and its central desire to live as "sons of light" [*sic*] separated from a world populated by the "children of darkness." We encounter a community that is at once intensely devoted to the correct observance of Torah in all its details and magnificently aware of God's grace and mercy as the foundation for righteousness: "The perfection of my way and the uprightness of my heart is in his hand. He shall blot out my transgressions by his righteousness.... My justice is from the fountain of his righteousness." This hymn at the end of the *Rule* breaks all stereotypes of Judaism as a religion of "works" in opposition to "grace." 1QS resonates in important ways with the New Testament, from the dualism of the Johannine literature to Paul's understanding of God's mercy as the foundation for our righteousness.

This beautiful edition opens with an accessible and lucid introduction by Charlesworth, beautifully illustrated with full-page photographs of the Qumran site and the caves where the scrolls were found. Charlesworth discusses the discovery and contents of the scrolls, the community that wrote and preserved them, and their significance for our understanding of early Judaism and the birth of the church, closing with an outline of the *Rule*. Following this brief introduction are clearly legible photographic plates of each of the eleven columns of 1QS with facing page transcriptions with critical apparatus comparing the text of 1QS with the six copies (and fragments) of the *Rule* found in cave 4. These plates are the chief selling point of the volume, for it is as close to examining the *Rule* itself as most students of Qumran are likely to come. Following the plates are translations by leading Dead Sea Scrolls scholars in English (J. H. Charlesworth), Modern Hebrew (E. Qimron), French (J. Duhaime), Italian (P. Sacchi), German (H. Lichtenberger), and Spanish (F. Garcia Martinez). A centerfold of the complete *Rule of the Community* completes this ultimate coffee table edition of an ancient Jewish text. Readers interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the beliefs and life of the Qumran community, and the significance of these texts for our understanding of early Judaism and Christians would be advised to turn first to the incomparably more comprehensive and affordable books by G. Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (New York: Penguin, 1997), and J. VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans,

1994). For those who are pursuing advanced studies in IQS itself, or who just enjoy beautiful reproductions of ancient works, the present volume will be an indispensable and enjoyable aid.

David deSilva

**Robert Hetzron, ed., *The Semitic Languages*, London/New York: Routledge, 1997. xx + 572 pp., hb., \$200.00.**

**Edward Lipinski, *Semitic Languages: Outline of a Comparative Grammar* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 80), Leuven: Peeters, 1997, 754 pp., hb.**

Both of these volumes are very important introductions to the Semitic language family, of which the Hebrew and Aramaic of the Bible are a part. Unfortunately, their price will undoubtedly limit them to academic library collections. Each does an admirably job in presenting the languages involved, even though they approach the task from differing perspectives.

Hetzron, retired from the University of California at Santa Barbara, has assembled an outstanding team of twenty-three scholars from around the world, most of whom are well-known in their work in the language which they present. Each individual language (Old- Akkadian, Amorite and Eblaite, Aramaic, Ugaritic, Ancient Hebrew, Phoenician and the eastern Canaanite languages, classical Arabic, Sayhadic [Epigraphic South Arabic], and Ge'ez; Modern- Arabic dialects and Maltese, Modern Hebrew, Neo-Aramaic, modern South Arabian, Tigrinya, Tigré, Amharic and Argobba, Harari, Silte [East Gurage], and Outer South Ethiopic) is covered by a chapter of up to 31 pages. These are preceded by discussions of the family sub-groupings within Semitic, the various writing systems, and the grammatical traditions of Arabic and Hebrew.

Each language is presented as regards its phonetics (the sound system), morphology(word form), and syntax (word order and interrelationships). Brief bibliographies for those interested in doing further exploration are provided. Languages are presented in transcription, which is useful since few would be expected to have a mastery of the multiplicity of scripts represented. This makes the volume more accessible, though one would have to be a fairly committed student to be able to wend through the entire volume. It does present a useful and readable, though of necessity brief, introduction to each language.

Lipinski has a different goal in mind, as is reflected by his subtitle. He sets out, as stated in the introduction, to provide 'primarily an introductory work, directed towards an audience consisting, on the one hand, of students of one or several Semitic languages, and, on the other, of students of linguistics. Its aim is to underline the common characteristics and trends of the languages and dialects that compose the Semitic language "family" by applying the comparative method of historical linguistics' (pp. 17-18).

The introductory section defines the Semitic languages, and places them within the context of Afro-Asiatic languages. He briefly discusses proto-Semitic and the various North (Ugritic, Paleosyria, Amorite), East (Akkadian), West (Canaanite, Aramaic, Arabic), and South (South Arabian, Ethiopic) Semitic languages and their scripts. Lipinski then does a detailed comparative analysis of the language family members as regards phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon. For those not familiar with

linguistics, he provides a useful glossary of technical terminology from that field. There is also general index of over 40 pages, and an additional index of words and forms for each language, which could serve as a mini-dictionary.

The book itself is a tour-de-force, the result of decades of dedication to a wide range of languages, the likes of which would be hard to match for any other individual scholar today. Lipinski does not claim equal expertise in all of the languages discussed, but acknowledges gratitude to a number of leading scholars whom he has consulted, their works being listed in a 45 page bibliography. The volume will be the standard for years to come, and will be a model for future research in the field and a resource for all interested in the topic. It should be added to every specialist Semitics library, and should also be on the shelves of the better seminaries. The publishers and contributors of both works are to be thanked for their important and exemplary work. David W. Baker

**John Huehnergard, *A Grammar of Akkadian*, Harvard Semitic Museum Studies 45; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997. xl + 647 pp., cloth, \$44.95.**

**idem, *Key to A Grammar of Akkadian*, Harvard Semitic Museum Studies 46; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997. viii + 137 pp., cloth, \$24.95.**

Akkadian is the Semitic language used in Mesopotamia from the early third millennium BC until after the time of Christ. It is the earliest Semitic language attested to date. Israel and its ancestors had much to do with speakers of this language. This ranged from Abram's departure with his family from Ur, where it would have been used, to Israel's return to the area against her will at the time of her exile to Assyria (722 BC) and Babylonia (586 BC). Akkadian was used to record numerous religious, economic and historical texts which cast helpful light on the events, culture, and beliefs of Israel and her neighbors. Adding to the importance of the language is the number of texts in Akkadian which have been preserved. Written mainly on clay tablets which, when baked, becomes much more permanent than papyrus or parchment, the amount of written material in Akkadian greatly exceeds that from the same period in Hebrew. Finally, on the linguistic level, Akkadian is a sister language to Hebrew and Aramaic, and an understanding of its grammar and vocabulary greatly assists our appreciation of these two biblical tongues.

John Huehnergard, professor at Harvard University, is to be thanked for providing for us the most thorough introduction to Akkadian in any language. He uses an deductive pedagogical approach, overtly modeling his grammar on those of Thomas Lambdin for Hebrew, Ethiopic and Coptic. Chapters, of which there are thirty eight, present the grammatical rules of concern with detailed discussion and paradigms. The Akkadian is presented in transliteration into English letters. Chapters conclude with exercises including vocabulary, assignments, and translation from and into Akkadian.

In lesson 9, the Akkadian writing system is introduced, and from then on signs are added to the vocabulary for memorization. They are given in Old Babylonian lapidary (monumental script carved in stone) and cursive scripts (used on clay), as well as the more common, and simpler, Neo-Assyrian forms. Exercise in transliteration and translation of these are also included. The correct answers are provided in the supplementary Key.



The chapters are followed by a supplementary reading selection from the Old Babylonian version of the Gilgamesh Epic in transliteration. A 45-page glossary of all Akkadian words encountered in the book is a boon, since there is no handy, one-volume dictionary for Akkadian. A list of Sumerian logograms and their Akkadian equivalents is also provided, as is an English-Akkadian word list. Five appendices cover dating systems, weights and measures, the historical development of Akkadian phonology, and the literary Standard Babylonian dialect and Assyrian, with their divergences from the Akkadian taught in the volume. The volume also includes with 31 paradigms, each with cross references to the places where they are discussed in the book itself: 3 for pronouns, 4 for nouns and adjectives, and the rest for verbs. It concludes with indexes of the various texts reproduced in the volume and of grammatical forms and subjects.

The volume, and the key, look like they would be suitable for self study, since the explanations are quite detailed, although classroom instruction and interaction. After successfully completing the volume, one would be very well prepared to read texts from numerous periods in various literary genres. I just wish the volumes were available when I studied Akkadian. They should be in all academic biblical studies libraries, and budding Hebrew students would be well rewarded by working through them.

David W. Baker

**Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann, *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, translated by Mark E. Biddle, 3 vol., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997, 1638 pp., \$119.95.**

This useful reference work is a translation of the *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, which was originally published in 1971. The conciseness of the entries and the scholarship of the contributors made the original a helpful resource indeed, and the content of entries has been translated without major alteration, apart from some updating of editions and translations referred to. A new key has been added to the start of each entry which cross-refers to discussions in BDB, *TDOT* by Botterweck and Ringgren, Koehler and Baumgartner's *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Van Gemenen's *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (*NIDOTTE*), Harris et al., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, and Strong's concordance numbers. Also added was a concordance of places where the Masoretic Text verse numbers, which are used in this work, diverge from those of English translations.

Each entry consists of five elements: a discussion of the root and its use in other Semitic languages, statistical data on the use of the root and its forms (supplemented by an appendix with tables of most frequent Hebrew words, most common verbs, total word counts for each OT book, and other interesting information), the general meaning of the root in Hebrew, its theological significance, and comments on its subsequent usage in early Judaism and in the New Testament. The work itself concludes with indexes of Hebrew and Aramaic words (one in Hebrew characters and a second in transliteration), English glosses, modern authors, and a lengthy one (130 pages) of Scripture references.

There are less entries than the more recent *NIDOTTE*, but they at times greatly outshine them in length. For example, the entry on 'name' (*shām*) covers nineteen pages in *TLOT* but only five in *NIDOTTE*. It would not be redundant to have both works in

one's library. *TLOT* would indicate the understanding of main-line biblical scholars, mainly from Europe, and provides useful information such as distribution statistics which *NIDOTTE* does not provide. The latter presents generally a more conservative perspective which is more up-to-date. All academic biblical studies libraries should have both sets, and serious OT students will find themselves delving into both.

David W. Baker

**Willem A. Van Gemeren, ed., *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, 5 vol., Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997, 5965 pp., \$199.00.**

This mammoth undertaking will greatly repay all who delve into its riches. Thanks must be expressed to the thirteen editors, over two hundred authors, and the publishers for the vision and execution of this project. It joins the previously published *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, edited by Colin Brown and published in 1975. While the latter has been gainfully used for almost a quarter century, the editors have built on its format, keeping its helpful features while making the present volumes even more user-friendly.

Readers will find *NIDOTTE* consists of at least three different reference tools. The first is a book-length (218 page) "Guide to Old Testament Theology and Exegesis." This starts with an introduction (Van Gemeren) to the methodology and layout of the project. This must be read to best utilize the material which follows in the dictionary proper. Then come the following: Introduction- Hermeneutics, Text and Biblical Theology, 1- "Language, Literature, Hermeneutics and Biblical Theology: What's Theological About a Theological Dictionary?" (K. Vanhoozer); Part I- The Reliability of the Old Testament Text, 2- "Textual Criticism of the Old Testament and its relation to Exegesis and Theology" (Bruce Waltke); Part II- History, Theology and Hermeneutics, 3- "Old Testament History: A Theological Perspective" (Eugene Merrill), 4- "Old Testament History: A Hermeneutical perspective" (V. Philips Long); Part III- Literature, Interpretation, and Theology, 5- "Literary Approaches and Interpretation" (Tremper Longman III); 6- "Narrative Criticism: The Theological Implications of narrative Techniques" (Philip Satterthwaite); Part IV- Semantics, Interpretation, and Theology, 7- "Linguistics, meaning, Semantics, and Discourse Analysis" (Peter Cotterell); 8- "Principles of Productive Word Study" (John Walton); Part V- Canon, Literature, Interpretation, and Biblical Theology, 9- "The Flowering and Floundering of Old Testament Theology" (Elmer martens); 10- "Integrating Old Testament Theology and Exegesis: Literary, Thematic, and Canonical Issues" (Richard Schultz); Conclusion, 11- "Several Illustrations on Integrating of the GUIDE with *NIDOTTE* in Doing Old Testament Exegesis and Theology" (Van Gemeren). Each of these most useful introductions conclude with very helpful bibliographies. These chapters alone could serve as a textbook for a course in exegesis or hermeneutics. The last chapter in particular will repay study by those who want to use this work most effectively.

The next major section, stretching from mid-volume I through mid-volume 4, contains lexical articles discussing individual Hebrew words, arranged according to the Hebrew alphabet. These are similar in format to their NT counterparts. Each entry has the lexeme with a number taken from Goodrick-Kohlenberger's numbering system.

which is more complete and up-to-date than that of Strong. There are also brief definitions of the lexical forms. Following are a discussion of linguistic cognates in ancient Near Eastern languages, the meaning and use in the Old Testament and in post-biblical literature. The lexeme is then placed in one or more relevant semantic fields, which will help find other words that can help in understanding the words usage, with cross-references made to other related entries. A bibliography also accompanies each entry. Due to the layout of this section, some Hebrew knowledge is useful.

The third major section is a topical index of almost 1,000 pages. Here entries are listed according to the English alphabet. There are discussions of proper nouns, concepts such as adoption and idolatry, as well as presentations of the theology of individual OT books. Extensive cross-references back to the previous section make this a more suitable entry point for those whose Hebrew is lacking.

The fifth, index volume, is a treasure trove in itself. It begins with an alphabetical 'Index of Semantic Fields,' collecting all of these together into one place, providing another useful avenue for entering into theological analysis of the OT. It is made more usable by an eight page set of directions. An index of Hebrew words and phrases which are discussed follows, with the Hebrew appearing in transliteration as an aid for non-Hebraists. Scripture and subject indexes follow, and the volume concludes with tables for converting Strong's numbers to those of Goodrick-Kohlenberger, and vice versa.

While one must be aware of what can and cannot be done through theological word studies (see James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical language*, 1961), readers will greatly benefit from the judicious use of this work. For the NT, I find myself turning more frequently to *NIDNTT* than to Kittel's longer *TDNT*, and I imagine the same will apply here in reference to Botterweck and Ringgren's *TDOT*. All readers of this review should look at what the project has to offer, and serious students should plan on purchasing it, either from Zondervan or in electronic format through Logos Research Systems, for which I can supply information (e-mail: dbaker@ashland.edu; 419-289-5177).

David W. Baker

**Gregory A. Boyd, *God at War: The Bible and Spiritual Conflict*, Downers Grove, Illinois: 1997, 414 pp., pb, \$19.95.**

This book is not for those seeking an easy, "how-to" approach to spiritual warfare. It is for anyone who desires an in-depth, scholarly, biblical study of evil and the place of a warfare world view in scriptures.

"The central thesis of this work is that this warfare world view is in one form or another the basic world view of biblical authors, both in the Old Testament and even more so in the New. This is not to suggest that the biblical authors . . . deny that evil is also a reality of the human heart and human society. To the contrary, biblical authors consistently demonstrated a passionate concern for confronting evil in all the individual and societal forms it takes" (p. 13).

The author believes that the presence of evil and spiritual warfare was not something that early Christians simply contemplated intellectually. It was a reality of life that they actively confronted each day. The difference between the view expressed



in scripture and the view often expresses today is a matter of where one starts.

"... do we start with a view of God as being at war with evil or with a view of God as controlling evil? ... the central thrust of this work has been to argue that if we model our approach to the problem of evil after the New Testament, we must in every instance opt for the former, not the latter, starting point" (p.291).

Boyd confronts the classical-philosophical theology held by many in modern Western Christian circles. He does so, not with lofty philosophical arguments, but by holding up the real face of evil expressed in the story of one little Jewish girl and her mother living in the Warsaw ghetto during Nazi occupation. Having thus raised our consciousness, the author methodically presents the biblical approach to evil and warfare.

Part One of the book systematically examines "The Warfare World View of the Old Testament" in 167 pages. Part Two analyzes in depth "The Warfare World View of the New Testament" in 124 pages. The author then includes 101 pages of extensive notes, reflecting his goal to write the book at two levels. In the body of the text, the author presents a solid exposition of the subject for the general reader. He attempts to satisfy the needs of the scholar through his comprehensive notes.

This is not a book one breezes through in one reading. It is a book that one settles down with for a while to soak in the depth of research and wealth of insight, and it is worth the time.

Gregory A. Boyd is a professor of theology at Bethel College and a preaching pastor at Woodland Hills Church in St. Palls, Minnesota. He has also written *Cynic, Sage or Son of God?* and *Recovering the Real Jesus in an Age of Revisionist Replies*. Boyd is working on a sequel to *God at War* titled, *Satan and the Problem of Evil*.

Walter Kime

**Kevin Giles, *What On Earth is the Church? An Exploration in New Testament Theology*, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995, 243 pp., \$16.99.**

In a vast world where Christians are living on every continent and claim membership to many different denominations, we remain uncertain as to the meaning of "the church." In this enlightening book Giles offers the Trinity as an analogical model to define the church as it should exist today.

Kevin Giles, an Anglican minister and theological consultant for World Vision Australia, offers several reasons for writing such a book. Protestant scholarship recently has not produced detailed studies on ecclesiology of the caliber that Roman Catholics have achieved. In addition, he wishes to challenge the modern individualism that is so prevalent in the western church.

The author approaches this study from two directions. The first seven chapters deal directly with scriptural analysis: the teachings in the four Gospels, and the apostolic theology in the book of Acts, the epistles of Paul, the non-Pauline epistles, and Revelation. It is in these chapters that Giles asks the questions: What did Jesus intend by calling the disciples, and did Jesus found or institute the church? Answering these questions takes up more than two-thirds of the book.

In the final three chapters the author moves toward a systematic theology. He discusses the ecumenical movement and the change that has taken place in its view of "the church." He challenges both the conservative evangelical and the liberal views of the church and provides an alternative ecclesiology based upon the Trinity.

Giles suggests that finding a working definition for the church by merely translating the word "*ecclesia*" is impossible. Therefore, he sets out to look at the many names that scripture has ascribed to the church. This provides a complete portrait of the church as seen in the New Testament.

One main problem to which Giles continues to return is the presupposed individualism that permeates modern thought. He asserts that the idea of autonomous congregations and even individuals scattered throughout the world is a concept foreign to Scripture. Scripture sees the church in three ways: the universal community, the local community, and the individual congregation. However, he suggests that congregations are never autonomous; there is always a sense in the New Testament of being a part of a larger body.

Giles also critiques static concepts of the church. He says, "Besides confirming the basic premise on which the study commenced, we discovered not a community established and defined once for all, but a community in transition" (pp.182). He suggests that the church needs a provisional ecclesiology that allows change to take place as it continues to develop on earth.

Giles finds the following characteristics to be basic to a correct definition of the church: community, unity, diversity, and changes that continually occur. He claims that divisions in the church are present with us only until the communal life of Christians is revealed on the last day.

He also offers an interesting basis for our ecclesiology. Rather than base it upon scripture alone or upon tradition, he suggests that we build our ecclesiology upon the triune nature of God. Along with this model the author gives four distinct aspects that should describe the church: communal, ecumenical, egalitarian, and non-sexist. This final chapter gives us a practical view of how the church could be realized on earth.

Giles provides the church a foundation upon which it can continue to build and transform itself. This book is a scholarly work, thoroughly researched, and well-written. Anyone wishing to read this should set aside extra time. Ministers, students, and laity will find this a valuable resource as they develop their understanding of the church.

Andrew S. Hamilton

**Tom Yoder Neufeld, *Put on the Armor of God: The Divine Warrior from Isaiah to Ephesians*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997, 182 pp., \$45.00.**

"I was struck by the importance of power and empowerment in Ephesians" (11). So reports Tom Yoder Neufeld, an associate professor of Religious Studies at Conrad Grebel College, University of Waterloo, in Ontario, Canada. This discovery took place in the basement of the library at Harvard Divinity School in 1984 as he did research for a graduate seminar on Roman Christianity. He goes on to say, "My attention fixed quickly on chapters 1 and 3, but especially on the motif in chapter 6 of believers in the armor of God, at war with the powers in the heavens (11).

Motivated by scholarly, theological, and pastoral interests, the author pursued the subject of the Divine Warrior throughout his graduate studies. *Put on the Armor of God* is in essence the dissertation accepted by Harvard Divinity School. This scholarly document follows the motif of the Divine Warrior from Isaiah 59 through The Wisdom of Solomon 5 and I Thessalonians 5, to its conclusion in Ephesians 6. "Several issues attended this study from the very beginning: agency, status, the function of mythological and/or metaphorical terminology, and finally the relationship of the human to the divine" (12).

With disciplined thoroughness, Neufeld carefully examines the context of each text as well as the Divine Warrior and the armor. Each step of the way he analyzes the passage and reports his observations. The document is a detailed study of the Greek and Hebrew, and is extensively footnoted. From Isaiah 59 where God saw that there was no justice and none to intervene, "So He Himself stepped in to save them with His mighty power and justice" (Isaiah 59:16, NLT), to the imperative in Ephesians for the community of saints to "put on all of God's armor" (Ephesians 6:11, NLT), the writer traces the evolution of the tradition-historical motif of the Divine Warrior through a significant transformation.

In Isaiah, it is God who puts on his own armor and fights the enemies of justice. In Ephesians, it is the church that is called to "battle at the very front lines of cosmic hostility" (151). Neufeld finds that I Thessalonians 5 is at the very heart of this transformation.

In Thessalonians 5 Paul takes the breath-taking step of placing the confused and even fearful Thessalonians into God's armor, thereby implicating them in the invasion of the Divine Warrior. More over, the surprise element of that divine intrusion is heightened by the nature of that participation—the militant exercise of faith, love, and the hope of salvation (154).

*Put on the Armor of God* is not light reading for the mass market. It is a scholarly investigation that challenges the role of the church in the struggle of reconciliation. At a time and in a society where the role and authority of the church is often minimized, I found it refreshing to discover again the values and power of the Divine Warrior who calls the believer to an aggressive involvement in the battle. Walter J. Kime

**Henry T. C. Sun and Keith L. Eades, with James M. Robinson and Garth I Moeller, eds., *Problems in Biblical Theology: Essays in Honor of Rolf Knierim*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, 403 pp.**

This is a useful collection of 25 essays, mostly in English though 4 are in German. Many of the essays are in explicit dialogue with some aspect or other of Rolf Knierim's significant writings on Old Testament Theology, often seeking to extend the implications of Knierim's work.

It should immediately be said, however, that the title of the book is misleading. On the one hand, problems of *biblical* theology, in the sense of the interpretation and use of Old and New Testaments together as scripture, are almost nowhere in view (apart from in the short and crisp essay by Pannenberg), for this is a collection of essays about the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible. On the other hand, the term "theology" is left



generally undefined, and so the essays range widely from positivist historical accounts of Israelite religion and literature to varying attempts to reflect on the hermeneutical issues of Hebrew scripture as an enduring authority and resource for Christian faith. For me, the tenor of the book sometimes tilts more in the direction of aspects of ancient religious thought than of constructive hermeneutics and theology; but my difficulties here, which relate to the wider question of what theology is and how as a scholarly discipline it may be appropriately practiced, are perhaps simply difficulties with contemporary biblical scholarship more generally.

Some essays discuss primarily questions of method and approach. Rolf Rendtorff gives, as ever, good insights into German scholarship, while Burke Long offers an interesting account of differences between modern and postmodern approaches to biblical study (using 2 Kings 3 as a test case). Marvin Sweeney discusses the significance of the respective canonical shapes of Christian Old Testament and Jewish Tanakh. General questions of textual criticism are discussed in a characteristic essay by James Sanders, while some possible implications of the Hebrew text as found at Qumran are sketched out by George Brooke. Among the exegetical studies, Roy Melugin's exposition of Isaiah 40-55 stands out as a persuasive account of the movement of thought within the biblical text. And I was fruitfully provoked to reflection by Antony Campbell's structural analysis of David, Saul and Goliath. in 1 Samuel 16:14-18:30. A range of contemporary issues are also allowed to set the context for, and interact with, exegesis, as when Elmer Martens discusses "Yahweh's Compassion and Ecotheology" or Stephen Reed engages with diet, animals and vegetarianism.

In all, a worthwhile collection. It does not, however, so much offer fresh channels of theological thought as helpfully extend existing ones.

R.W.L. Moberly, Durham, United Kingdom

**Roger Badham, ed., *Introduction to Christian Theology* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.**

This volume contains essays by fifteen scholars who between them describe the current state of Christian theology in North America. The contributors are often eminent (Hauerwas, Henry, Hick), and each is asked to describe his or her own tradition in order to provide a survey of what is happening and where. My first response as a reader was to wonder about this procedure: whilst reading the introduction, it makes perfect sense as a theory, but on seeing the execution in the papers, I was left with the feeling that more profitable results might have been obtained in different ways. Many of the papers have the feel of manifestos, or even sloganeering, and in some cases the reader will wonder what has been added to his or her knowledge: that Carl Henry (for example) thinks inerrancy is important we knew; to understand why, or even what he means by it, we would need to go beyond the series of headlines that is offered here.

The best of the papers are those which set out to define a tradition by exploring it. James Buckley's essay on Postliberal theology, for instance, argues an interesting case that this is a more Catholic tradition than it has usually been thought to be, thus offering a new and worthwhile reading of that tradition. Those that carefully define a minor or foreign tradition will be useful to those of us who were previously unaware:

Werner Jeanron exposes the concerns and presuppositions of what he calls 'correlational theology' in revealing ways. Hauerwas is uncharacteristically disappointing, Oden at least entertaining, and so we could go through. The papers vary in quality, but some profit will be found in almost all. On these grounds, the book is useful for anyone wanting a map of the current state of North American theology.

Back to the introduction, for the book has a further purpose. Badham finishes his comments by raising a concern. What this volume points to is fragmentation: four essays in the penultimate section demonstrate this well, as feminist theology becomes further fragmented into womanist (black woman's theology), *mujerista* (Hispanic/Latina woman's theology) and Asian-American woman's theology. Badham asks for an Augustinian hermeneutics of charity, so that each fragment can hear what the other is saying and take it seriously as a conversation partner. 'This book,' he writes 'is an attempt to create a conversation by presenting competing voices that can speak truthfully of their own theological positions.' (p.21) The 'competing voices' are well-chosen and each is given a right to speak; but no 'conversation' was evident to this reader, at least. This is, I think, not a fault of the editor, but of the contributors: North American theologians, more so than those of other parts of the world, it seems, no longer know how to talk to each other – and some of them appear not to *care*. This is a sad situation for women and men who claim to speak on behalf of a faith that values communication so highly that it begins with the incarnation of the Divine Word.

Steve Holmes, Spurgeons College, London.

**Kelly James Clark, *When Faith Is Not Enough*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans., 1997, pp. 190, \$18.00.**

Two primary themes lace their way throughout this thoughtfully written work. One concerns the question of doubt's relationship to faith. As knotty as the first is, the second is embarrassingly uncomplicated: Why do our most profound attempts to find meaning and happiness apart from faith inevitably lead to despair and brokenness? In illustration of the seemingly impenetrable complexity as well as serene simplicity of authentic faith, characters as diverse as Abraham, Job, Kierkegaard and the Brothers Karamazov parade before the reader in this volume.

The author is refreshingly honest as he wrestles with the "shadow of doubt" – the hiddenness of God – particularly in the contexts of a pluralistic, and for the most part pagan, culture. Doubt, writes the author, is "that secret sin buried within the soul." Although we are afraid to touch it, authentic Christian belief "demands that we uncover it, understand it, and make our peace with it." The doubt encountered on life's journey with which the author struggles is a doubt endemic to religious belief and is to be distinguished from obstinate unbelief. The latter, in the author's words, is characterized by "a hardness of heart, a stubbornness, an unwillingness to trust or hope in God." The sincere doubt of the believer, by contrast, is the "authentic expression of anguish over our wretched believing condition."

While belief in God may provide the intellectual and moral center of our lives, the fact remains that, existentially, we may still not be certain of its truth. Critical scrutiny – an ability observed by the author to be both blessing and bane – must be applied to our faith if in fact that faith is seaworthy. The reader is thus cautioned: "Not all

atheists are fools or idiots," for intellectual humility is a virtue that recognizes the limit of human understanding—an understanding that is incapable of penetrating the mystery of providence and pain, innocent suffering of gratuitous evil. In the end, when alone with our questions, we are left with the confession of the writer of Hebrews: "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of realities not seen." Like Abraham of old, we too do not see the inheritance; we merely bear seeds of the promise—a promise not yet fulfilled.

The search for self, as described by the author (a professor of philosophy at Calvin College), ends in the manifestation of the virtue of humility: "It is only when we realize that on our own we are nothing that we can open our self up to God"; any "trivial attempts to fill up that space with meaning amount to precisely nothing." Humility, in contrast to the arch vice pride, represents the "unmasking of the self." This "unmasking" is a necessary precondition of all meaningful human fellowships and the foundation-stone for the "establishment of a proper relationship with God." Finding one's true self is no other than finding "satisfaction in the esteem of God." Finding personal self-esteem in the esteem of God is understood by the author to reconcile the two poles that constitute biblical anthropology—human worth as the *imago Dei* and human depravity. To deny either pole is to deny the essence of human nature. Doing justice to both elements finds expression in an unconventional bit of rabbinic wisdom: "A man should carry two stones in his pocket. On one should be inscribed, 'I am but dust and ashes.' On the other, 'For my sake the world was created.' And he should use each stone as he needs it."

Life's pilgrimage, sustained by a healthy, probing faith and manifesting itself in the grace of humility, forbids us from becoming either complacent or anxious. The faith-life is anchored in the awareness of "a moral and spiritual center of the universe," around which our lives, our health, our being, revolve. We live and press on, knowing that God is perfecting the good work already begun in us—a work that He will ultimately bring to completion, regardless of faith's mystery that so often seems impenetrable.

For the wayfarer wrestling with doubt and seeking a spiritual compass, this volume is a welcome road map, even when the author stubbornly resists dispensing pat answers to unexpected turns in life's way. J. Daryl Charles, Taylor University

**Millard J. Erickson** *Postmodernizing the Faith: Evangelical Responses to the Challenge of Postmodernism* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1998.

Erickson will need little introduction; this volume contains a list of 'other titles by...' that will ensure that. In this little (161pp., including index) book, he returns to the task of mapping contemporary evangelical theology that he previously essayed in *The Evangelical Left*. Erickson announces his purpose as 'to survey some representative evangelical responses to postmodernism.' (p.9) A few pages of introduction to postmodernism, and then we are led through a tour of evangelical theologians that makes up the meat of the book, before a final comment on the possibility of Christian apologetics to postmodern thinkers. I suppose Erickson would expect his reviewers to consider how well he has read each theologian, and how usefully these thinkers span the range of theological responses. The book contains accurate readings, as far as I know,



and certainly maps out some territory. Its flaws are on a far more fundamental level than that.

'...[S]ome *representative* evangelical responses ...' It might be considered deeply ironic that a book on postmodernism should regard the views of eight (including Erickson himself) North American males as in any sense 'representative'. This is more than just ironic, however: it is an indication that Erickson has not begun to grasp the challenge thrown down by postmodernity. In this duel the respondent is not offered choice of weapon, and if he arrives with a coterie of male WASP seconds he will be laughed off the field.

And so we go through the book. At every turn, the things that the postmodern critics have devoted themselves to systematically casting doubt on, or even undermining, are simply assumed. Erickson offers a reading of each of his representatives: what makes him presume that he can read and report with any degree of accuracy? Does he not realise that 'every decoding is a further encoding', and so that his 'readings' are no more than reflections of his own subconscious? Worse, he applies the same interpretative questions to each one, assuming (with charming naïveté, no doubt) that 'knowledge', whatever that may mean, is not necessarily shaped by its object. In each case aspects are described as 'good' and 'bad' suggesting, astonishingly enough, that Erickson apparently has straightforward access to some transcendent value system which will enable him to pass moral judgement!

Postmodernity is something serious. It is a challenge on a methodological and philosophical level to current ways of thought and practice. It is a full frontal, and apparently successful, attack on precisely those intellectual presuppositions that Erickson adopts in writing this book. The whole conception of this book unreflectively assumes the falsity of the postmodern critique, and yet Erickson then offers a supposedly neutral evaluation of a series of positions relating to this critique. Methodologically, this would be a bizarre procedure whatever the object in view; with this object in view it is indicative of a failure to grasp what is being discussed. The reader who has already decided that the questions asked by postmodernity are to be dismissed will find his or her prejudices confirmed by this book, and will no doubt gain some insight into the responses being made by (North American, male) evangelicals; the reader who does not regard these questions as quite so trivial, however, will just be bemused.

Steve Holmes, Spurgeons College, London

**Henry H. Knight III, *A Future for Truth: Evangelical Theology in a Postmodern World*. Nashville: Abington Press, 1997, 253 pp.**

While postmodernity challenges the very foundation of Christianity, we find an evangelical scholar proposing an answer to its charges. However, this time the approach comes from the perspective of pietism. Knight writes this proposal hoping to explain how Christians can believe in a revelation that they claim is universally significant and still proclaim its message to a post-modern world.

Henry Knight III, an Assistant Professor of Evangelicalism at Saint Paul School of Theology, challenges the traditional universal truth claims. In a world where we are faced daily with diverse cultures and perspectives, universal truth is naturally

questioned. Knight has thoughtfully put together a ten-chapter book that suggests Christianity is now positioned better than it has been in centuries to spread the gospel.

In the first three chapters of this book, Knight offers definitions to key issues surrounding truth claims. He sets out first by offering a definition to a label that many different people lay claim to, "evangelicalism." In this first chapter, he shows the wide spectrum of meaning that it holds and how he will use it in the text. Considering evangelicalism, he interestingly enough embraces Bloesch's criticism of liberal and conservative theology which shows that there is not much difference between the two. The second and third chapters discuss "modernity" and "postmodernity." These three chapters give the reader a fine overview to some key issues facing Christians today.

However, it is chapter four that truly introduces the central issue of the book. From here to the end of chapter ten, Knight wrestles with the prospect of proclaiming Jesus Christ as the universal savior to a postmodern world. Within these chapters he compares and contrasts the ultra-critical and the post-critical approaches. In the end, he concludes that it is the post-critical description of narratively shaped communities--enhanced by a strong view of the Holy Spirit--that allows Christians to proclaim Christ to a postmodern world while remaining faithful to the gospel.

Knight has skillfully put together a book that challenges the conservative evangelicals. Among its strengths, this book deals with relevant issues for today's world. Knight has provided a fair introductory analysis of postmodernity that is readable for students. He has also given us a good introduction to some contemporary theological issues.

This book, however, had some weaknesses as well. While I found the discussion interesting, it became noticeable that key figures outside this book who have been active in the debate concerning modernity and postmodernity were missing. This may be due to Knight centering around evangelicalism, but it has resulted in the failure to acknowledge some key questions dealing with these issues. Nevertheless, in the end Knight provides evangelicals with the weighty challenge of entering into the postmodern world while still proclaiming Jesus Christ. I would recommend this book to pastors and students alike.

Andrew S. Hamilton

**Arthur F. Holmes, *Fact, Value and God*, 1997. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, pp. 183, \$18.00.**

In light of what is deemed "a checkered career" of twentieth-century moral philosophy, Arthur Holmes explores the fact-value connection in the wider context of metaphysics and theology. Unconvinced that we live in a value-free universe and that fact and value are unrelated, the author attempts to explore historical ways in which moral values have been grounded in the nature of reality. What emerges, in the author's words, is "a more pervasive linkage than I had anticipated" between religious and moral beliefs, despite contemporary philosophical claims to the contrary.

Chapters 1 to 6 concern themselves with metaphysical accounts of the cosmos, teleology and notions of good and evil, ranging from pre-Socratic philosophers, Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics to Augustine and Aquinas. The pre-Socratics largely replace the early mythology about nature and the gods with a more "scientific" outlook, which in turn prepares the way for Platonic and Aristotelian metaphysics. A central concern of

Plato's works is the improvement of the soul. It is the Sophists who most personify what Plato opposes, namely, rhetoric as a means to achieve influence, rather than the inculcation of virtue. Whether addressing matters of the state or the individual, Plato believes that knowing good is essential to improving the soul. In the author's view, Plato's concept of God, though emerging only gradually, anticipates Judeo-Christian teleology and moral arguments and influences the development of Christian theology.

While Plato is much more the moralist and reformer, Aristotle seems more the objective scientist. Aristotle's dissatisfaction with his predecessors is their lack of consistently scientific method. Moral philosophy in Aristotle draws an analogy between nature and human action. Nature's ends are not matters of change; Aristotelian teleology pervades all things, including human well-being (*eudaimonia*). Virtue means the flourishing of the human condition; moral virtues are the excellence of the appetitive life, and intellectual virtues of the life of the mind.

During the New Testament era, Christian and Greek philosophy come into repeated contact. The apostle Paul cites Stoic philosophers as he addresses Stoics and Epicureans in Athens, and his reflections on creation and conscience in Romans 1 and 2 are reminiscent of Stoic notions of natural law and the cosmos. An important touch point between Christian and Stoic philosophy is the Logos as the divine intermediary which governs the universe. Important distinctions between three competing explanations of the cosmos emerge during the early Christian centuries. The dualist echoes the gnostic claim that matter exists independent of God, and therefore, is a source of evil. For the pantheist, Stoic and neoplatonic ideas of matter emanating from the divine make the divine and nature one, whereby evil is only a privation, a deficiency, in reason. The theist, on the other hand, makes the crucial distinction between God and the natural world. Created *ex nihilo*, the cosmos is given its existence—and value—due to God's free action. Creation *ex nihilo*, moreover, means that evil is not an inherent necessity in the structure of the cosmos—an issue that is more fully expounded by Augustine.

The problem of evil constitutes a major influence in Augustine's occupation with Platonic and Manichean thought. As understood by the latter, an eternal dualism allows no room for the eventual vindication of good, and any notion of justice is illusory. For Augustine, the implications of the biblical doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* satisfy conditions for human freedom and divine sovereignty, while offering hope for both history and the human soul.

To the extent that Plato anticipates Christian metaphysics for Augustine, Aristotle does so for Aquinas. Unlike some of his day, Aquinas was unwilling to acknowledge that philosophy and theology stood in opposition; rather, reason and revelation, rightly understood, work together. Knowledge comes to human beings in two ways: through divine law as revealed in the scriptures and natural law that is "written on the heart," as Paul expresses it. Natural law derives from self-evident "first principles" elucidated by reason and implanted by God the Creator. In integrating Augustinian theology with Aristotelian philosophy, Aquinas sets forth an understanding of ethics that is seen to be "inescapably religious"; moral good is grounded in the reality of God.

Over two millennia witness to the conviction that transcendent realities supersede history and human choices. For the author a shift can be seen with the nominalist construction of human nature, Scottish realism, Kantian dualism and volitional



autonomy, utilitarianism, Hegelian dialectic and Nietzschean evolutionary naturalism. Chapters 7 through 13 are devoted to this gradual shift.

Utility and personal happiness constitute the measure of ethical conduct for pragmatist-hedonists such as John Stuart Mill. For Mill, no metaphysical theory or theological presupposition is needed. Liberty and justice cohere in a social stability that issues out of subordinating individual impulses to social ends, without any recourse to metaphysical claims. Ethics in Mill is an empirical science that understands people as complexities of sensation who are ordered and managed by social means.

In Kantian thought, reason not only reflects nature but also determines its essence and meaning, in accordance with the Enlightenment tradition. Whereas Kantian reason is able to exercise its sovereignty over the phenomenological world, it is powerless to discern anything about the noumenal realm of the spirit; discerning meaning and value by Kantian logic requires the use of the irrational. For Hegel, Kantian ethics is too abstract. Reason and passion need reconciling. The pulsation of reason and will throughout history is due to an all inclusive Absolute Spirit, the highest expression of which finds its embodiment in the nation-state. Hegelian "theology" deifies history, with its creative and dialectical processes. Consequently, Hegel is unable to acknowledge any ultimate distinction between good and evil, since both categories inhere in a nation of God. Hence, radical evil—such as murder, genocide or chronic poverty—as well as natural catastrophe—e.g., floods, earthquakes and pestilence—defy any attempts at explanation. In the end, such historical positivism cannot provide any assurance of good overcoming evil, leaving the question of the relationship between fact and value unresolved.

While ethics is demystified and "humanized" in people like Hume, Mill, Kant and Kegel, the relativizing process is complete in the work of Nietzsche, who sees no theoretical or pragmatic reasons for belief in God. Christianity, with its emphasis on the fictitious afterlife, constitutes a rejection of the "real" world, thereby "corrupting" humanity. Christian faith serves as a "counter-concept to nature," an invention that degrades both the body and the passions. Nietzsche's reconstruction is a call to move "beyond good and evil" and to embrace nature. Nature itself reflects a will to power, a universal drive that underlies the world. Although it makes no explicitly metaphysical claims, Nietzschean evolutionary naturalism, in the author's view, takes a metaphysical posture by its rejection of ethical objectivity.

The purpose of this volume is to trace briefly the historical roots of moral philosophy and demonstrate the connection between the fact-value relationship and notions of God. Several broader historical approaches to ethics reveal it to be grounded not just in fact but in some concept of divine transcendence, whereas modern and postmodern approaches to ethics divorce themselves from this presupposition. But even ethical relativism, as the author observes in tipping his hat to academic celebrity Richard Rorty, depends on a presupposed belief in God. The great value of this volume, which is selective and assumes general philosophical knowledge on the part of the reader, is the author's ability to critique the movement of moral philosophy, with its increasingly secular and immanent trajectory, in the light of an alternative perspective—namely, belief in the *Logos* and an ordered universe, the conviction of which "grounds objective truth and goodness, gives purpose in life and viability to reason, and offers hope of an eventually moral world."

J. Daryl Charles

***Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia: Christian Moral Perspectives. Committee on Medical Ethics, Episcopal Diocese of Washington, D.C. Morehouse, 1997.***

This book is the report by the Episcopal Dioceses of Washington, D.C., concerning the question of assisted suicide and euthanasia for those who are in pain and near death. The report attempts to present "both sides of the question, as well as two 'middle' views" on the issue (xi). The report indicates that some would have wished for them to "reach morally binding conclusions," but that they have not yet found a way to do so (xiii). The committee indicates a strong commitment to openness and dialogue, especially in the event that new information is made available.

The committee is to be commended for offering helpful distinctions and definitions of relevant terms (Section B), which should be helpful to those who have not read widely on the moral questions surrounding assisted suicide and euthanasia. The report is fair and accurate in presenting contemporary discussion of the issues.

However, in my view this report has significant weaknesses, most of which stem from its failure to make any substantial moral judgement about the issues that are presented. Setting aside secondary problems with this report, then, I will attempt to address what I think is the main problem.

There is an apparent presumption that the issues are best sorted out simply by presenting all sides as fairly and accurately as possible, and recognizing differences of opinion. However, there are problems with such a tactic. First, truth becomes secondary, something perhaps seen best in an analogy with certain court room practices. What is important is persuasion, and sometimes the most persuasive view is not the one that corresponds with truth. Persuasion may be derived from stacking up numerous arguments that confuse and create an appearance of a "preponderance of evidence". Second, and following on this point, the process of weighing arguments in such a way often does not take special account of those arguments that better grasp the truth. To illustrate, it is like stacking weights on two sides of a scale, but failing to account for differences in individual weights. As a result, the "winning" side is the one with the most weights, not the most weight.

An indication of the problem of the committee's approach is found early on. Since there is disagreement among Christians, they suggest, we may consider assisted suicide and euthanasia a disputable matter (cf. Rom. 14:1). Thus, it seems to be implied, we need to agree to disagree and work on building up the community. Is this framing of a possible solution acceptable? Disagreement amongst Christians on an issue does not indicate that the issue is a "disputable matter". It may indicate that someone (or some group) is wrong! American slavery was not a disputable matter simply because some Christians argued strongly against it and others argued strongly for it.

The committee presents all arguments openly, fairly, and as objectively as possible, leaving judgments and conclusions to the reader. This is highly unfortunate, for two reasons. First, the committee fails to discern the difference between weighty arguments and those that are not at all compelling. And second, it fails to draw its own moral judgment concerning assisted suicide and euthanasia. Perhaps what is needed, even more than "openness" and "dialogue" on these and other moral issues, is moral wisdom and courage. The committee serves as a voice of the Church, and the Church ought to be able to make moral judgements on such crucial issues. It ought not to have

simply presented the evidence for the jury to decide, but also to have weighed the evidence and offered a verdict.

Of course, when the committee is divided sharply, this is a difficult task. Yet that does not indicate that assisted suicide and euthanasia are disputable matters, but only that the committee, as a reflection of the Church as a whole, stands in need of the transformation of the mind and heart that would produce the unity of Christ. And, one would hope, a moral judgment on such significant issues.

K.T. Magnuson, Wake Forest, NC

**Michael Manning, *Euthanasia and Physician-assisted Suicide: Killing or Caring?* New York: Paulist Press 1998, ix + 120 pp., \$8.95.**

This is a concise, clearly written book on a pair of closely related ethical issues—euthanasia (E) and physician-assisted suicide (PAS)—that modern society is ever more readily embracing. Those outside of, as well as within, the church know the secular, popular level arguments that have led Oregon to legalize PAS and Holland to permit E—sympathy for a dying person who requests help to end their suffering. The initial problem for the reflective individual is to retrieve the reasons that underlie the traditional ethic against (suicide), E and PAS, so as to bear up to the seductive nature of the popular reasons that favor E and PAS. This book is very helpful toward that end.

Manning provides the reader basic definitions of E and PAS and sketches out the traditional Christian position, in particular, that which features the natural law tradition of Roman Catholicism and St. Thomas Aquinas. However, one of the main strengths of the book is its short chapter on the secular history of euthanasia (from Plato to Darwinism) and the religious history on “crimes against life” (from St. Augustine to the Magisterial Documents and arguments of John Paul II). The following chapter on “Self Determination” is an argument for moral limits on autonomy and compassion, by appeal to the literature of the Church, numerous contemporary theologians and bioethicists, e.g., Richard McCormick, William May and Daniel Callahan. The chapter on “Killing vs. Allowing to Die” addresses the most fundamental ethical distinctions that one must carefully sort out, together with the proper use of the Principle of double Effect. These distinctions must also be employed in order to hold that it may be permissible to discontinue life-sustaining treatment (in limited conditions) but that PAS and E are unethical in principle. This chapter is somewhat weak, as it employs “natural” conditions and “artificial” treatments as if they are moral distinctions per se, the “Principle of the Common Good” is too vague and open to misuse, and the reader is left unclear whether or not Manning is arguing that nutrition and hydration must be provided endlessly, e.g., in cases of the persistent vegetative state. It would be helpful there to add the American Medical Associations’ (Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs Statement on Withholding or Withdrawing Life Prolonging Medical Treatment, March 15, 1986) clinical criteria for marking off permissible cases of allowing to die from the impermissible practice of PAS and E. The criteria for termination of life-sustaining treatment are that: the patient must be terminally ill, imminently dying, suffering, they must meet the conditions of making an informed request to forgo treatment, and then the patient may be sedated and allowed to die from the underlying condition, but must not be intentionally killed, i.e., as in acts of PAS and E.



Chapter 7, on "The Slippery Slope Argument," outlines this important type of argument and explains its pragmatic effectiveness in non-religious settings where consequences, rather than moral principles per se, get peoples' attention. It highlights relevant historical evidence of the slippery slope occurring in German medicine prior to World War II that led the way to the "Final Solution" in Nazi Germany. This chapter also sketches out a slippery slope condition that is currently occurring in the Dutch experience of the medicalization of the "merciful administration of death." Basic literature references are given that point the reader to further study. The final chapter is weak, as it is only a four page conclusion and commentary on the preceding materials. However, the purpose of this work is to provide a concise introduction to the formative arguments and distinctions that the general public must become knowledgeable of in order to understand the seriousness of PAS and E; ideas that are fashionable and seductive of many within the Church, and not just those outside its boundaries.

Howard M. Ducharme, University of Akron

**Sondra Ely Wheeler, *Stewards of Life: Bioethics and Pastoral Care*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.**

The purpose of this book is to discuss moral questions raised by the use of technology in contemporary medical practice, within the framework of Christian faith. Wheeler, who is Assistant Professor of Christian Ethics at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C., seeks to show that bioethics is a task for the Church, a task that the Church ignores only at her own peril and that of society. Further, she seeks to provide a basic introduction to the language, questions and methods of bioethics, and to equip pastors and chaplains to provide counsel for parishioners and patients.

Chapter One addresses Christian faith in relation to medical practice. Wheeler rightly asserts that ethics is not the right place to start, because it is one's belief system that determines one's ethics, i.e., Christian faith determines Christian practice, so faith issues must first be clarified. Chapter Two discusses the (traditional) four main principles of medical ethics: autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence and justice. Chapter Three seeks to apply these principles to difficult cases in bioethics. This is a valuable chapter, not least because it deals with actual cases, including whether to intubate an elderly or critically ill person and whether aggressive surgery is appropriate for a very premature infant. The fourth chapter discusses four roles of the pastor in a medical crisis: "presence", "interpreter" (of the situation), "partner in discernment", and "witness to the gospel." In her conclusion Wheeler issues a reminder that there are (and should be) limits to the practice of medicine and bioethics that need to be recognized and respected.

Wheeler has largely succeeded in accomplishing her goals. This book is not only a helpful introduction to bioethics, but it also addresses the pastoral concerns that are left out of other introductions. Further, the author is to be commended for raising *theological* considerations rather than relying merely on sociological, psychological, legal and technical points. For example, the discussion of autonomy demonstrates serious theological reflection. Christians, Wheeler asserts, have good reason both to affirm a basic concept of autonomy, and to look upon certain accounts of autonomy with suspicion. Autonomy is not an individual freedom to be understood apart from

responsibility toward others and accountability to God. Rather, autonomy indicates a right and responsibility to take seriously the stewardship of life that God has given His image-bearers.

Mention should be made of some weaknesses in this book. First, while it serves its purposes well, it is a very brief introduction and not a tool for in-depth study. It is only 118 pages of text, with a brief bibliography and no index or glossary. References to significant thinkers, such as Augustine (p. 44f.), are not documented with sources, which limits the student who would want to do further study.

In addition, Wheeler indicates a strong influence of narrative theology on her thinking in Chapter One. Although she may be applauded for attempting to incorporate both narrative and principal ethics in her approach, she emphasizes the notion of "story" without suggesting whether the story is or must be true. It may be asked whether "story" is a strong enough concept to guide ethical reflection and deliberation. The issue is important for determining the function of Scripture in ethics. It also presses us to ask whether Jesus Christ accomplished something objectively on behalf of humanity, or do we simply have stories related by his followers? It is not clear what Wheeler thinks (cf pp.22, 26).

Further, in her discussion of various ministry roles, the role of witness to the gospel, arguably the most significant of the four, is not given due weight. One last minor point. In her discussion of artificial feeding of a person whose quality of life is severely diminished, she asks, ~'can medically provided nutrition sometimes be ended *because of the burdens it imposes?*'" (p.83, italics added). In reality, it is the disease, not the treatment, which imposes the burden. It is a significant point in that the way that we articulate problems affects the way that we perceive and think about them, and it affects our determination of action.

These weaknesses do not outweigh the strengths of this book, however. It is a helpful and practical contribution for ministers who have questions or need to think about bioethical issues.

K.T. Magnuson

**David W. Bercot, ed., *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs*, Hendrickson: Peabody, MA, 1998, 704pp., \$34.95 hb.**

This book is basically an extended index to the ten-volume *Library of Ante-Nicene Fathers*, now also published by Hendrickson. The author has gone through these volumes and selected quotations according to subject matter, making it possible to see at a glance what the early Christians thought about such things as the mark of the beast and natural law, as well as more familiar topics like baptism and martyrdom. He has also taken the trouble to cover subjects which were unknown to the early church, but which may have been dealt with in an oblique way. A good example of this is the entry on purgatory, which refers the reader to 'dead, intermediate state of the' and to 'prayer VI: should Christians pray for the dead?'

For those with fading memories who cannot quite recall where it was that Tertullian compared Athens with Jerusalem, for example, this book will save hours of labor, though it should be said that in this particular case it is necessary to look under philosophy, since there is no entry for Athens, and the ones for Jerusalem deal with other matters. Particularly important is the fact that each entry begins with a verse or two from

the Bible which refer to the topic being discussed, so that it is possible to compare Scripture with the Fathers on the same page.

Preachers looking for sermon material will naturally turn to 'quotable quotes from the fathers', perhaps stopping off at 'entertainment' along the way. Mr Bercot claims that theology took a back seat to living the Christian life in the early centuries of the church, but in spite of that his index is highly theological, and includes almost everything one would expect to find in textbooks of a much later date. There are also helpful references to pagans like Pythagoras and Plato, and even Zoroaster gets a mention.

The one drawback to the dictionary is that it is necessary to use the Hendrickson edition of the Ante-Nicene Fathers along with it, since references are given to that, and not to the chapter and verse of the works quoted. Thus, for example, we discover that Noah is mentioned in Lactantius 7.63, which means p.63 of volume 7. Only by looking that up do we find that it is from chapter 14 of the *Divine institutes*! In effect this means that consulting the dictionary is only the first of a two-stage process which would be virtually impossible to complete without the LANF. That may be a drawback to some potential users, but for those with access to the LANF texts, this dictionary will be an essential resource. It is to be highly recommended, and will surely be widely used by scholars, preachers and students alike.

Gerald Bray, Beeson Divinity School

**Hans Küng, *Great Christian Thinkers*, John Bowden, trans., New York: The Continuum Publishing Co., 1996, 235 pp.**

The noted Tübingen theologian describes this book as a short forerunner to the second volume of his trilogy *The Religious Situation of Our Time*. Before discussing Christianity in our day (the subject of Vol. 2) he wants to summarize and evaluate seven of the greatest theological minds Christendom has produced.

The chapter titles describes the value he ascribes to them: 1. Paul: Christianity becomes a world religion. 2. Origen: the great synthesis of antiquity and the Christian spirit. 3. Augustine: the father of all western Latin theology. 4. Thomas Aquinas: university science and papal court theology. 5. Martin Luther: return to the gospel as the classical instance of a paradigm shift. 6. Friedrich Schleiermacher: theology at dawn of modernity. 7. Karl Barth: theology in the transition to postmodernity.

Küng has tried to identify a handful of thinkers whose influence proved to be so great that they could be said to have initiated paradigm shifts in the way Christian theology has been conceived and written. Paul, for example, took a provincial Messianic sect and turned it toward becoming a world religion. Two centuries later Origen married that faith (for better or for worse) to Platonism and Neoplatonism, the greatest philosophical approach of the ancient world. A century and a half later Augustine struck out in a new direction for Roman theology by his thinking on sin, grace, and predestination.

Each of the seven, as Küng sees it, stood at a major crossroads of intellectual history and pointed a new way for the church. Through the course of Küng's career (he wrote this when he was 66 years of age) he has given special attention to the doctrine of justification and the theology of Karl Barth. Those emphases are here also. His chapter on Luther is one of the best, and he recounts insightful conversations with Barth.



The book likewise reflects K  ng's lifelong impatience with the hierarchical government and teaching of his church. At several points he uses the place of women as a test case, and he speaks sharply of his church's lapses. Commenting on Luther's "return to the gospel as the classical instance of a paradigm shift," he writes, "Rome has not drawn the consequences which followed Luther for the structure of the church. Indeed the present clerical unspiritual dictatorship of Rome again mocks the basic concern of the Reformation, which is also a good Catholic concern (the Pope is not above scripture). Rome still has little understanding of what Luther wanted in the light of the gospel" (pp. 147-148).

Each chapter begins with a chronology of that thinker's life, identifies the nature and importance of their work for their day, and evaluates their contribution for our time as well. K  ng has thought long, hard, and broadly. Many in our world admire him; others believe he is dangerous. But he continues to push the church--all of the church--to really give to the world what we claim to have: light and life in Jesus Christ.

Jerry Flora

**L. W. Barnard (tr.), *Justin Martyr, The First and Second Apologies*, Ancient Christian Writers 56, New York/Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1997, vi + 245 pp.**

Justin Martyr wrote two apologies--two appeals, in effect, to the Roman emperors Antoninus Pius and his adopted son Marcus Aurelius calling for the suspension of the execution of Christians merely on the basis of their devotion to this new "philosophy" and not on the basis of conviction of criminal behaviors. His work merits the careful attention of all students of the New Testament and early Christianity as a testimony to the way in which Christians were slandered by many in the ancient world and the nature of the prosecution of Christians before the general persecutions of Decius and Diocletian in the third century. Justin also provides a valuable window into the early church's reading of the Jewish Scriptures as a body of predictions of the ministry and passion of Jesus, the meaning and practice of baptism and the Lord's Supper in the second century (concerning which Justin gives an extensive account), the way in which the teachings of Christianity were compared with the teachings of Greco-Roman philosophical schools and the pagan myths and practices, and the progress of certain heretics in Rome (like Simon the Sorcerer and Marcion).

Barnard has provided in this volume a very readable translation of these apologies, together with a helpful introduction and excellent notes discussing matters of the translation of difficult passages, tracing the philosophical influences upon Justin, and providing copious references to classical, scriptural, and patristic authors for the further investigation of these connections and cross-influences. An appendix describes the features of Justin's eschatology and accounts for the sometimes contradictory schemes by a closer examination of the concerns which shaped Justin's different accounts, and a thorough bibliography serves as a guide to further reading on the work of Justin and his environment.

While there are some details which merit criticism, such as Barnard's invoking Matthew 25:13 and Justin, *Dial.* 28.2-3, as examples "not of apocalyptic, but of realized, eschatology" in his appendix and his mention of an assault on the church by Domitian

without clarifying this statement in light of the rather cogent argument of L. L. Thompson (*The Book of Revelation* [New York: Oxford, 1990]) against the likelihood of Domitian's interest in persecuting the church, this is nevertheless a very welcome guide to Justin's key writings. Of special value are the extensive notes and Barnard's discussion of the connections between Justin's interpretation and defense of the gospel and the philosophical conceptions which undergird his presentation.

David A. deSilva

**Aloys Grillmeier with Teresia Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition, Volume 2: From the Council of Chalcedon to Gregory the Great, Part 4: The Church of Alexandria with Nubia and Ethiopia after 451*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996. 550 pp, cloth, \$50.00.**

One of the contributions of postmodernism to theology has been the reminder that dogma does not exist in a vacuum. Rather, it exists with all kinds of historical and cultural particularities. In this book, Aloys Grillmeier together with Theresia Hainthaler examine the development of Christology along the Nile prior to the Islamic conquest. The author refers to this work as "a Christological Nile expedition." This is a surprisingly accurate description as the authors have organized the material in such a way that it truly has the feel of a journey. The book follows a geographic progression that moves from somewhat familiar to extremely remote terrain.

This work is the fourth part to volume two of Grillmeier's impressive study of the historical development of Christology. It is, itself, divided into four parts. The first part addresses Alexandrian-Greek Christology. It details the early struggle between the Chalcedonians and the anti-Chalcedonians and examines the influence of the Alexandrian scholars on Christology. Journeying up the Nile, the second part examines Coptic Christianity. The central figure for this part is the Coptic monks Shenoute. The section concludes with a study of the Christology of Coptic liturgical prayers.

Part three is a brief section and is entitled "The 'Cross of Christ' over Nubia" which Grillmeier graciously explains as the area along the Nile between Aswan and Khartoum. This is the shortest of the four parts of the book but intriguing, nevertheless. The material is derived from "archeological rescue work" that was made necessary by the construction of the Aswan High Dam. The expedition ends in Ethiopia with part four discussing Ethiopian Christianity. Much of this section is devoted to explaining the introduction and propagation of Christianity in the area. Toward the end, Grillmeier makes the interesting assertion that Ethiopian Christianity has characteristics of Jewish-Christian origins.

The book's high level of scholarship is immediately evident even before reading it. The fact that this is the fourth book on Christology between Chalcedon and the death of Gregory is a strong indication of the thoroughness of Grillmeier and Hainthaler. Furthermore, the depth of research is evidenced by the footnotes which consume an average of one-third to one-half of each page. In my opinion, this is a significant book not only because of its extensive use of the secondary literature, but because of its examination of the primary literature. From the poetry that is considered in part one to the prayers and liturgy that are considered in parts two, three, and four, this book wisely looks beyond theological treatises for insights into Christology along the Nile.

This book is also important because in much of this work the authors are forging new ground. This is particularly true of material on Nubia and Ethiopia. Apart from the work that Grillmeier and Hainthaler have done, much of the material covered in this book would remain largely inaccessible. For these reasons the authors have done the academy an immeasurable service. In my opinion, the scholarship of this book further establishes *Christ in Christian Tradition* as the current definitive work on the historical development of Christology.

Rob Douglass

**Arthur J. Freeman, *An Ecumenical Theology of the Heart: The Theology of Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf*, Bethlehem, PA and Winston-Salem, NC: The Moravian Church in America, 1998, 346 pp., \$24.00.**

This is a timely book in that the year 2000 marks 300 years since the birth of Count Zinzendorf. It celebrates renewed interest in Zinzendorf within the Moravian Church and throughout the larger scholarly world. A reticence against hero worship has meant that his own communion has often neglected Zinzendorf's history and theology. And, until recent academic interest, Pietism has not had favorable print over much of the last century. The fact that much of Zinzendorf's writings are not available in English translation has also contributed to his neglect in American scholarship. Freeman's work therefore addresses a real need in the study of Moravian Pietism and its contribution to the larger Christian community.

Freeman is well suited for the task of communicating Zinzendorf. He was the subject of his doctoral dissertation at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1962 (p.1). For over 30 years he taught at Moravian Theological Seminary, including a course on Zinzendorf's theology (p. 307). He has served as a bishop in the Moravian Church and participated in many of its theological and ecclesiastical deliberations over the last decades. His book reflects his excellent facility in the German language of Zinzendorf's writings and the theological sources which surround such a study.

The purpose of the book is to put Zinzendorf's theology in an ecumenical perspective and integrate it with concerns for spiritual formation (pp. iv, 2). Freeman's object is to show the ecumenical spirit of Zinzendorf's theology in his own day as well as its possibilities of addressing broadly-based Christian issues of the present time. This is most obvious in the "reflection sections" that conclude each major chapter, where the author describes possible connections between Zinzendorf's thought and the modern age. Here the pastor/churchman in Freeman comes to the surface: he wants to help Christians to grow in Christ. Frequently a chapter ends with his own contemplative poetry.

The book has six major chapters. The first covers the life and history of Zinzendorf and the Moravian Church. Then five chapters summarize the Count's theology under such topics as the Knowledge of God; Scripture; Christ, the Spirit and the human predicament; Christian life and ethics; and the church. These chapters have extensive quotes from Zinzendorf's writings, since they are not readily available to English readers. There are many good insights into Moravian thought and practice, and difficult themes in Zinzendorf are put into helpful contexts.

The book is difficult to read, however, and evaluation does not come easily. I found its historical sections to be the most lucid and thus the most beneficial. Thus the



introduction, chapters 1 and 6, and Appendix A (Outline of Zinzendorf's Life) were very helpful. Freeman has succeeded in making Zinzendorf accessible in his long quotations from his writings and in the sources indicated in the footnotes and bibliography. Scholars might well find this the greatest contribution of the book.

As a theology of Zinzendorf, it is a disappointing book. Whether this is due to the unsystematic nature of Zinzendorf's theology or to Freeman's style of writing is not clear. One suspects it is both. On the latter question, a lot depends upon a reader's expectation. The author is true to his purpose in that he attempts to put Zinzendorf at the service of ecumenical Christianity and spiritual formation. But this raises a suspicion that we only have "a part of Zinzendorf," and that the part that is presented might skew the whole.

One cannot expect a systematic theology of Zinzendorf when that was not the nature of the man. But could we not have a historical theology of the Count? Freeman's expertise is in New Testament studies. This is manifested repeatedly in his chapter introductions and closing reflections. He then moves on to Zinzendorf's thought and concludes with the contemporary Moravian Church or modern religious questions he feels Zinzendorf might address. At times he compares Zinzendorf to thought currents of his times, but seldom are theological precedents prior to Zinzendorf engaged, nor developments between Zinzendorf and the modern period traced out. I, for one, came away from the book feeling that I still do not understand many aspects of Zinzendorf's thought.

Freeman has cut a new path for scholars. What is needed now are extensive translations of Zinzendorf's writings which are not yet available in English. Then others, especially those gifted in historical theology, might try their hand at giving the scholarly world a more adequate theology of Zinzendorf. In spite of its many virtues, this book—in the estimation of the reviewer—has given us too much Freeman and too little Zinzendorf.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

**Abraham Friesen. *Erasmus, the Anabaptists, and the Great Commission*. William B. Eerdmans, 1998.**

This an extremely important and exciting book. The influence of Erasmus on the early Swiss Anabaptists—the circle initially influenced by Zwingli—and on Menno Simons has been the subject of scholarly research. But the line taken here by Friesen is to a large extent a new one. Although the book has a clear focus, at many points there are also new angles that illuminate the wider story of the Reformation.

What Friesen argues is that the Anabaptist movement was deeply indebted to Erasmus for its interpretation of Christ's Great Commission to teach and then to baptize. In particular he shows that Erasmus's preface to his Greek New Testament, his paraphrase of the Great Commission and his annotations to the New Testament take us to the core of what became the Anabaptist understanding of believer's baptism and of mission. Erasmus asked how Christ's disciples understood and applied the Great Commission. This led him to the Acts of the Apostles and thus to the practice of the church.

Much Anabaptist scholarship, which at times concentrates on the contrasts between Anabaptist thinking and other religious stands in the sixteenth century, will be

given a fresh perspective through this study. Also, those who work in the area of Erasmian influence on the mainstream Reformation will have to take account of the ways in which Anabaptism, rather than Lutheranism, was the movement that (to adapt the image from the time) hatched the egg which Erasmus had previously laid.

Abraham Friesen writes in an engaging way. His massive historical learning as a professor of Renaissance and Reformation history (at the University of California) is worn lightly. Despite the ideas presented being ground-breaking, there is nothing here that is inaccessible. This is a book which could be read by someone beginning Reformation studies but is also a challenging and thrilling read for those who have spent many years in the field.

Nor is Friesen afraid to move from the historical to the contemporary. Thus the book can be read with great profit not only by historians but also by theologians and by those engaged in inter-confessional dialogue. For Friesen the Erasmian focus on teaching the central doctrines of the faith has the potential to bridge Catholic/Protestant divides. This certainly calls for the Anabaptist story to be seen in a new light. Indeed all those who want to study Anabaptism, for historical or for contemporary reasons, should engage with this book.

Ian Randall, Spurgeon's College, London

**David T. Gouwens, *Kierkegaard as Religious Thinker*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996, ix-xv + 248 pp., \$54.95 hb., \$17.95 pb.**

David Gouwens in his work, *Kierkegaard as Religious Thinker* makes use of Kierkegaard's later religious writings and also includes his earlier philosophical works. He studies Kierkegaard's religious and theological work with the emphasis upon human nature, Christ and Christian discipleship. Gouwens enables the reader of his book to view Kierkegaard as a religious thinker because Kierkegaard himself saw religion as basic and central to his entire work. Kierkegaard himself sought to bring about religious response from his writings.

Gouwens presents Kierkegaard as an advocate of genuine Christianity. Gouwens discusses Kierkegaard's treatment of religion with the focus upon the use of the dialectic of "becoming Christian". He discusses both the edifying discourses and the pseudonymous writings.

The structure of Gouwens' study begins with Chapters 1-3 which form an introduction to some of Kierkegaard's central concerns as a religious thinker and Christian thinker. Chapter 1 examines Kierkegaard's diagnosis of certain diseases of reflection, especially those which deal with Western philosophical and theological tradition.

Gouwens offers an outline of Kierkegaard's understanding of an alternative "style" of "subjective thinking" in philosophy and religion. Chapter 2 examines how Kierkegaard proposes and practices this alternative kind of "reflection" that addresses these diseases. Gouwens focuses on Kierkegaard's anthropological reflection that interweaves psychological analysis and specifically Christian dogmatic concepts in a religious understanding of the self. In this, Gouwens allows for a closer look at Kierkegaard's religious understanding of the self including moods, emotions and "stages on life's way" and also the Christian narrative understanding of the self.

Chapter 3 focuses on Kierkegaard's understanding of "becoming religious" which Gouwens sees in Kierkegaard's use of the terms "up building" and "forming of the heart." Gouwens examines here Kierkegaard's vision of becoming religious, not in terms of mere "feeling" or decision of the will but in the development of "personal emotional and ethico religious capacities." Gouwens shows how this links Kierkegaard more strongly with the virtue tradition in moral philosophy and theology. He demonstrates this over against the stereotype of the "existentialist Kierkegaard." (p.25-26)

In Chapters 4-6, the author deals with Kierkegaard's treatment of religion. Gouwens focuses here on the Kierkegaardian dialectic of "becoming Christian" with particular attention to the relation between Christ and the believer. Particular emphasis is upon the relation between Christ and each of the three Christian virtues of faith, hope, and love.

Chapter 4 looks specifically at Kierkegaard's anatomy of Christian faith as "disposition." Also, Gouwens here connects the concepts of grace and freedom, and Christology and soteriology in Kierkegaard. Gouwens continues the "dispositional" analysis of Christian existence in Chapter 5 by dealing with the Christian response to Christ in suffering and hope. Chapter 6 finishes the analysis of Christ and the Christian virtues by looking at Christian works of love.(p.26)

Gouwens in Chapter 7 deals with the theme of recent current scholarship in Kierkegaard on the question of the common interpretation of his thought as privatistic and asocial. Gouwens examines the later Kierkegaardian concept of how the "dispositional" virtue language of faith, hope, and love is altered. Gouwens addresses the development in his last years of the public role for Christian disciplinship as "the witness to the truth."(p.26).

The author sees Kierkegaard situated between foundationalism and irrationalism. He sees Kierkegaard as an anticipation of the end of "modernity" while he stands at the center of the Christian tradition.

Gouwens in his work presents an excellent and insightful study into Kierkegaard as religious thinker. This work is suited for the scholar of Kierkegaard and for persons interested in recent scholarly debate in the works of Kierkegaard. Gouwens advances the research of Kierkegaard in the area of moral philosophy and theology with this excellent book. It is highly recommended for Kierkegaardian scholarship and study.

JoAnn Ford Watson

**D. Gibson, *Avoiding the Tentmaker Trap*, Hamilton, Ontario: WEC International, 1997, 155 pp., \$9.99. (WEC International, Lit. Dept., 37 Aberdeen Ave., Hamilton ON L8P 2N6, Canada).**

The arguments for missionary "tentmaking" have been numerous and compelling. As Paul sewed tents to help pay his own way to distant places to share the Gospel, so missionaries today could support themselves and avoid various hindrances of career missionary work. This would be the way to get into "closed countries" and bypass the long process of support raising, to say nothing of building rapport with business and professional people in other countries, and being able to follow the example of Paul and others in biblical times.



D. Gibson has written a concise and very helpful book evaluating the tentmaking movement. He begins with a brief overview of modern missions history, and some of the reasons why tentmaking became important. He presents two models from scripture, which he calls the Pauline Model, and the Priscillian model, since Priscilla and Aquila also supported themselves while doing God's work in many different places. Various situations and agencies call for tentmakers with more emphasis on ministry and others with more time and focus on the job. Both models are commendable, though Gibson concludes: "Those following Paul's example may suffer Paul's experience of 'hard work, sleepless nights, and hunger' (2 Cor. 6:5) as they try to find time for both employment and ministry outside their jobs. . . . For Priscillian tentmakers there is the danger of assuming that, having gotten in and making a professional contribution, the job is over" (p. 38).

Gibson proceeds to give the theological foundations for tentmaking, a brief history of tentmaking and the rationale for tentmaking, and finally comes to the tentmaking traps. Although there was a wave of tentmakers between 1960 and 1980, there are not many great success stories. The traps are: failure to learn the language and culture, difficulty in time management, lack of support networks, lack of Christian fellowship, stress with the expatriate community, inadequate or restricted housing, difficult adjustment of family, lack of security, poor preparation, lack of accountability, and breakdown of integrity.

In spite of these drawbacks, there are creative solutions that make tentmaking not only do-able but very desirable in many situations. Gibson spells out the possibilities for developing networks, working with mission organizations, forming tentmaking corporations, working in partnerships, and working as tourists. He works through the issues of finding a job and choosing a partner organization, and discusses the experience of bombing out. His convincing conclusion is that tentmaking can be a very effective means of doing missions today.

The clear and direct approach of this book makes it an encouraging source of information on tentmaking. Those questioning the validity of this model should expose themselves to the material in this practical little handbook. Gibson makes a convincing case for tentmaking as a means which God is using to increase His kingdom, and offers many sources of help for doing it effectively.

Grace Holland

**Jimmy Long, *Generating Hope: A Strategy for Reaching the Post Modern Generation*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997, 235 pp., \$14.99.**

Over three decades ago a generation gap was created when baby boomers rejected the values of their parents. Now, however, Jimmy Long believes that Generation X will reject the baby boomers' "drive for the 'good life' as its main guiding principle" (22). Subsequently, Xers have adopted their own values and distinguishing characteristics. Moreover, Long explains that the dynamics of this generation go beyond traditional values and characteristics because society is also experiencing a major philosophical shift from the Enlightenment to a postmodern period. Long suggest that Xers are the first purely postmodern generation. In his book *generating hope*, Long engages the reader by asking: "How will the church respond to these changes?" (18)

The author is a regional director for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, and has contributed to *the Small Group Leaders' Handbook: The Next Generation*. Long believes society is experiencing a tremendous upheaval where "the Pillars of 'modern' western civilization erected during the Enlightenment are now crumbling.... We are now in a period of cultural lag--in which most people in the western world are not yet aware as scientist and philosophers that the Enlightenment is over." (192) Long challenges the church to engage these changes, and suggests effective strategies in an effort to reach generation X with the gospel. In order to generate successful evangelism, Long clarifies the differences between boomers and Xers, and defines the characteristics of postmodernism.

Long's primary strategy is building community through relationships. He believes that Xers value relationships and will find meaning in things that they experience in the community. Long explains that boomers prefer anonymity and are more globally focused, while Xers will tend to participate more and be more focused on local communities. In other words, "boomers wanted to save the world, Xers want to make a difference in the neighborhood around them." (202)

The concept of shame is key to Long. The focus of shame is not on being a sinner that needs justification, but one who has experienced the shame of being separated from God. Long explains this by using the story of Adam and Eve: "Their awareness of their nakedness symbolized their awareness of their sinful state... Adam and Eve were now ashamed of their loss of unity with God and with each other, which was a vital part of who they were as complete person." (102) Long assumes that broken community is a major part of Xer's lives who have experienced broken promises from parents, friends and society. This context has made it difficult for Xers to have hope, so the church must be ready to enter into the pain and suffering this generation feels and offer a place for them to belong.

Furthermore, the church must recognize the broader cultural shift to postmodernism. Community plays a vital role in this paradigm shift also. Long explains that the Modernist chased truth that could be proved and dogmatically stated. In contrast, Xers are asking is it real, and "need to see the incarnation of the gospel in people's lives more than to hear the proclamation through our words" (210). For successful evangelism, Xers must see truth lived out through their communities.

The strength of this book is in Long's description of the intricate differences between the generations in light of the philosophical shift from the Enlightenment to Postmodernism. However, one ought to be aware of Long's perspective of those to whom he refers to as the Christian right. He sharply criticizes them and accuses them of hampering the spread of Christianity and creating an us-verses-them mentality. Those that support these Christian groups may be offended at his open attack against them.

In spite of the hostilities, which are limited to a few pages, this book is enriching to read. It provides cutting edge insights into the Xer's generation and the move toward postmodernism. Long's innovative suggestions will help put evangelicals on the front line of a changing society where they can offer hope to Generation X.

Kenneth L. Duffee

**Nick Pollard, *Evangelism Made Slightly Less Difficult*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997. Paper.**

Someone recently told me there is little hope for the youth of the present generation. They have no religious and moral foundation for living; everything is relative and there are no absolutes; they pick and choose what to believe; their worldview is distorted by the many options available in the present culture. They often are not aware of their worldview, yet moral, spiritual and social decisions are made based on it. Many people are unwilling to listen to the absolute claims of Jesus Christ because they are happy in the worldview they hold. In order to be impacted with the gospel of Jesus Christ in this cultural setting, one's worldview must be challenged to the point of discomfort. Being uncomfortable with one's worldview will create a potential to be open to hearing about Jesus, but change occurs slowly over time.

Pollard shares his significant experience in working with youth on college and university campuses. He has spent years conducting long and deep open forum discussions with college students in student lounges. In this setting students have an opportunity to explore the claims of Christ for themselves. They are given the chance to question a Christian by grilling, arguing and presenting contrary ideas and thoughts. The objective is to learn the way people think in the postmodern era. Pollard and his staff show genuine love for students by being available as they think through their worldviews at their own speed.

The book discusses the way people in the postmodern era think, and it illustrates methods of discussions and styles that promote thinking which clearly shows inadequacies in a value and belief system. Since many are unaware of their value system, this technique enables them to sort out the inconsistencies and false ideas they unintentionally believe. As students begin to think through their worldviews, they may begin to move one step closer to a desire to become acquainted with Jesus. Pollard calls this process "positive deconstruction." This process also must apply to Christianity.

The theme of the book is that evangelism is hard, but it can be made slightly less difficult. Understanding why evangelism is hard is the place to begin. In addressing the common reasons for hardship in this area, Pollard is quick to understand one's apprehensions, concerns and anxieties because he admits failure in some of the same areas. He gives excellent tried and proven logical solutions to the dilemmas experienced by the person engaged in witnessing or evangelizing. One example is that most people are not interested in an evangelistic campaign. It is better to trust God to provide opportunities, and to feel free to take advantage of them. People who are comfortable in general conversations often find witnessing opportunities opening up to them. Prayer is the key factor; any effort expended is futile without saturation in prayer.

The author scientific research training is evident in the layout of the book, which is set up in a problem-solution format, arguing from cause to effect. This format enables him to examine the problems in detail and to effectively propose solutions. Within this format, the book is broken down into four parts. Each part addresses a particular problem.

First, the problem of the postmodern, Post-Christian worldview is explored in detail. Pollard addresses the historical reasons behind the confused and convoluted worldviews people hold. The need is identified, and he addresses ways of helping



people who are happy in their present situation. In this section Pollard draws from the experience and knowledge he gleaned in listening to students over the years, identifying the worldviews that are characteristic of the postmodern post-Christian culture. His positive deconstruction solution is brilliant.

The second problem is how to help people who want to know Jesus. Pollard provides the solution in the balance of the section. An excellent summary of the biblical themes and topics that could be easily committed to memory is provided. Discussion of these topics is theologically sound. Scriptural text is separated into themes. Pollard draws from his own experience in anticipating questions people will ask and in presenting very helpful answers. Storytelling is his preferred method of communication. He has mastered it well.

Part three deals with the problem of apologetics. Although Pollard is a scientist, stories of his inadequacies in handling difficult and awkward situations illustrate his compassion and love for all people. Stories of errors give him credibility. Clear and specific illustrations and stories support the listed reasons that are given as guidelines. Excellent arguments and examples solidly support his answers to the reliability, consistency and origin of scripture issues. He gives a good logical approach to the issue of the Bible as history. Evidence issues are discussed with reasoned logic. Argumentation is solid and he draws a bottom line. His commitment to the integrity of scripture and the Christian life, and his respect for humanity are seen throughout this section in the illustrations and examples he uses.

Part four discusses problems inherent in leading people to Christ. Illustrations from his experience make it easy to understand the relationship Pollard presents. His solution to the problem is that single method does not exist. Repentance and change are custom made to the needs of an individual. In keeping with the illustration pattern and logical argumentation that characterized the book, Pollard clearly explains and differentiates the change inherent in a personal relationship with Christ. That the human mind and human will are involved in the change is a key point.

Pollard candidly points out in the Postscript that motivation for evangelism can run dry. Particularly this is true if motivation is based on results. The motivating factor that keeps one prepared at all times to witness is a passionate love for all people. This book reflects Pollard, not just his experience.

This book is exceptionally well done. This is an excellent source for training people interested in doing personal evangelism. The enormity of experience this book contains would serve as a useful reference source for those engaged in ministry to educational institutions. This book is easily read and understood so it could be used with any age group older youth through adult. It would serve as an excellent course in evangelism for the local church.

Phyllis J. Rhodes

**Walter Brueggemann, *Cadences of Home: Preaching Among Exiles*, Westminster/John Knox Press: Louisville, Kentucky, 1997, pp. 155, \$16.00.**

When the oldest shaman of the tribe declares, "I have a new story to tell," everyone gives full attention. So, when Walter Brueggemann, that grand dean of Old Testament studies, confides, "This book represents a heavy-duty rethinking for myself of the art and act of preaching," I, for one, am all ears.

The world of homiletics has been buzzing and biting round the carcass of inductive preaching - the declaration of general truths applied to individual problems (the scientific method of the Enlightenment). Charles Rice, Eugene Lowrey, David Buttrick, and Fred Craddock have all pronounced half-hearted eulogies on the old gray mare, and ridden off on horses of different colors, or more accurately, shades of the same color. The new breed share the common markings of narrative and story, imagination and openness.

Brueggemann rides the same pony, but does so with the grace and style of a different gait. Speaking from his rich background in biblical studies, he does a textual take on preaching in a post-modern, post-Christian world. The metaphor is "exile," an experience of "homelessness" for both the American church and culture.

The exiled Jews, like today's American evangelicalism (both liberal and conservative), "...experienced the loss of the structured, reliable world which gave them meaning and coherence, and they found themselves in a context where their most treasured and trusted symbols of faith were mocked, trivialized, or dismissed." (p. 2) The marks of such an experience include deep sadness, rootlessness, despair and a profound sense of God's absence. If you can identify with life "by the waters of Babylon" (and this reviewer certainly can), *Cadences of Home* will comfort and challenge, disturb and inspire.

In essence, preaching to "exiles" involves more than a shift in style; it requires a change in hermeneutic. He writes, "I do not believe that any single method of text interpretation is to be preferred to the exclusion of all others. I believe we must eclectically use all available methods, and that serious interpreters inevitably do. Nonetheless, the intentional embrace of rhetorical criticism seems to me especially important in a situation of a decentered community." (p. 58) He declares that the historical-critical method has its limitations and is particularly suited for upholding the establishment. However, exiles subvert the established order, and they do so with story, song, and imagination. Our Old Testament professor is calling for the practice of rhetorical criticism.

Rhetorical criticism suggests that what is said in Scripture depends in large measure upon how it is said. Wonderful examples are given in the book: Isaac and Esau, Elijah and Elisha, Cyrus the gentile messiah, and the birth of Solomon. Such an understanding and expression of the text is more a matter of provocation than pronouncement, more daring in imagination than declarative of dogma, and thick with incongruities, for such is the life of exiles.

I, personally, found the many examples of Scripture to be particularly helpful. Also, the expanded endnotes are useful to someone straining to keep up with the vast literature that undergirds the study. The theme of the exiled or decentered church is explored in the meaning of the text, in preaching as testimony, in evangelism, and as a model of the church. The book concludes with a challenge to be "exiles" with all the daring disciplines that open our hearts to a newness of God's presence.

One could argue that there is a bit of choppiness in the book, due, perhaps, to the fact that several of the chapters were written for different publications over a period of seven or eight years. I came away with the sense that each chapter could be expanded into a book in its own right (in places it is a bit like drinking from the proverbial firehose).

However, I cannot help but imagine that this is the first telling of the story, the first cohesive expression of the theme. It is the medicine for our experience. I, for one, request, "Say it again, we need to hear more."

Richard Parrott

**Jung Young Lee, *Korean Preaching: An Interpretation*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997, 150 pp., \$14.95.**

The meaning of the words was unintelligible to me, but the significance of the emotional tenor was unmistakable. I had given a copy of Jung Young Lee's book, *Korean Preaching: An Interpretation*, to a homiletics class I was conducting in the city of Sok-cho', about 200 miles east of Seoul. The animation of the discussion lead me to believe that Lee had critiqued his own book correctly: "My intent here is to offer a critical study of Korean preaching, which may arouse controversy among some Korean ministers, and suspicion among white American ministers." (p. 10)

Jung Young Lee was professor of Systematic Theology at Drew Theological Seminary in Madison, New Jersey. He has also authored a book of sermons and a book on the Trinity from an Asian perspective. The Koreans in my class knew of him. The discussion of the book was lively. My translator summarized the classes conclusion for me, "They think he (Lee) asks the right questions, but they do not like his answers."

Lee deals with the question of preaching and context. After outlining the rationale for his book, he looks at the cultural context of the Korean congregation. Shamanism, Buddhism, and Confucianism are deep dynamics that "still live in the hearts of the Korean people." (p. 29) Lee goes on to detail his interaction with these religious forms: participating in shamanic rituals; studying Buddhism at the Haein Temple; and celebrating Ch'u-sok, the national day of ancestor worship.

Lee characterizes Korean culture as "basically syncretic." (p. 37) From this stance, he critiques the Christian church as having rejected many cultural resources due to an exclusive approach toward other religions. Korean protestanism is an outward rejection of other religious forms. Lee contends that such a posture is rejecting what it means to be Korean. He observes: "However, no matter how much we want to cut ourselves off from our heathenish religious traditions, we can never be completely free of them. We are products of our past. Our attempt to be free from our past is merely an attempt to escape reality. Thus, our so-called heathenish traditions have been unconsciously integrated into our Christian life." (p. 138)

This theme is played out in an investigation of the Korean worship service and distinctives of Korean preaching where Lee believes that Shamanism and Buddhism are strong dynamics. He also opens the door to the pastors' possible misuse of authority where the Confucianistic ideal holds sway. For the Korean pastors' homiletic class in the sea resort of Sok-Cho', this was fuel for debate. I agree with my Korean friends, Lee asks the right questions, but his answers are not fully acceptable to me.

For me, the book had two values: a tantalizing introduction to the Korean church and an opportunity to view the issue of Christ and culture as a more distant observer. I found myself challenged with the pluralism vs. exclusivism of Lee's analysis and wanted to test his thoughts with Koreans. Further, I found myself testing the question in my own culture. To paraphrase Lee, our so-called "westernish" traditions have been unconsciously integrated into our Christian life.



*Korean Preaching* begins as an invitation to Americans to understand the Korean church but ends as an agenda addressed to Korean pastors. I read the book from the beginning as an American seeking to understand the Korean church but ended up reconsidering my own agenda concerning the question of Christ and Culture.

Richard Parrott

**Frank J. Houdek.** *Guided by the Spirit: A Jesuit Perspective on Spiritual Direction.* Loyola Press, 1996.

There are now many books on spiritual direction and a review of a book which deals with this area has to take that into account. Does Houdek's book offer something distinctive? The chapter headings seem fairly standard and at first sight there is nothing particularly new. Houdek deals with the director and the process of spiritual growth, some particular types of directees and their needs, prayer and spiritual discernment, and the director and the process of direction.

There are, however, insights which are fresh and stimulating within this book. There is a welcome balance between personal stories and wider contemporary analysis. What, then, are the main advantages for the reader?

In the first place, *Guided by the Spirit* certainly springs from considerable practical experience. Frank Houdek draws from over thirty years of work in the field of spiritual direction. This gives the book a realism which is most welcome. There are no superficial answers or trite suggestions here. Having said that, I wondered at one or two points whether the spiritual journey was being understood in too rigid a way.

A second important aspect of the book is that it is written from a Jesuit point of view. That does not mean that it is narrow in its perspective. Rather, what we find again and again here is the wisdom of a long tradition. Houdek acknowledges his own personal limitations and does not try to make his own story normative. Instead he points to ways in which each director can learn from the broader stream of experience.

What I found most helpful, however, was the way that diversity was addressed. In Houdek's approach there is no formula which is applied to each individual, regardless of the point they have reached on their journey. Not only is the uniqueness of each individual stressed, but the action of the Holy Spirit—in all his freedom—is seen as been at the heart of direction. The title of the book is highly significant. Linked with this concentration on the Spirit, I warmed to the way prayer was given such a central place.

Although the Jesuit background is evident, those from a very different tradition who are exploring spiritual direction will find this book a valuable resource.

Ian Randall, Spurgeon's College, London, England  
International Baptist Theological Seminary, Prague

**Mother Columba Hart and Jane Bishop, translators. *Creation and Christ*. Paulist Press, 1996.**

**Regis J. Armstrong and Ignatius C. Brady, translators. *True Joy*. Paulist Press, 1996.**

**Edmund Colledge and Bernard McGinn, translators. *Everything as Divine*. Paulist Press, 1996.**

These three booklets are published in the same format. Each is between eighty and ninety pages in length. The small page size means that the books can be slipped into a pocket and easily read, for example, on journeys.

The intention of these booklets must be borne in mind. They contain short selection from classics of spirituality. *Creation and Christ* offers extracts from the wisdom of Hildegard of Bingen, one of the greatest mystics of the church. There is an introduction, but it is brief and not designed to be critical. The selection is from Hildegard's *Scivias*—a title which is short for 'Know the Ways of the Lord'. Her call to write this, in 1141, came about through 'a fiery light of exceeding brilliance'. The topics covered here, which reflect the profound visions that Hildegard received, are the greatness and majesty of God, creation and fall, and Christ as Redeemer.

The aptly-title *True Joy* is a sample of the writings of Francis and Clare. There is a useful brief introduction to the life of Saint Francis. This is followed by his 'Admonitions' and by such famous poems as his 'Canticle of Brother Sun'. The material included certainly captures something of the spiritual vitality of Francis, but because he was a man of action his own writings were limited. This is even truer of Clare. Accordingly, in the part of the book dealing with Clare more space is given to a description of her life. Her 'Testament' is then reproduced. Those who are looking for a way to begin to read about the great mission from Assisi could start with this booklet, but might be better to read *The Little Flowers of St. Francis*.

The third booklet, *Everything is Divine*, contains the wisdom of Meister Eckhart, an outstanding Dominican friar who was born around the year 1260. True to his tradition, Meister Eckhart was a preacher. Part I of this book includes material from twenty-one different counsels which Eckhart gave young Dominicans, under the general heading 'On Discernment'. With his idea of God flowing through the world and with his refusal to be bound by reason over against mystery (which went beyond standard Dominican thinking), Eckhart has much to give to contemporary spirituality.

Ian Randall

**Millard J. Erickson and James L. Heflin, *Old Wine in New Wineskins*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997, 269 pp., \$19.95.**

In their book, *Old Wine In New Wineskins*, Erickson and Heflin recognize the changing face of the contemporary church where methods of worship and outreach are finding new expressions in an effort to reach an ever changing world. The authors support and encourage this change; however, they observe that as the church strives to adapt, the role of doctrinal preaching has declined. The authors support a stronger role for this discipline which they feel is essential to a vital church. They provide evidence

to support their view of the benefits of doctrinal preaching as well as offer practical guidance concerning the techniques of creatively exegeting and contextualizing doctrine.

The experiences of Millard J. Erickson and James L. Heflin compliment each other in this book. Erickson is a professor of theology at Baylor University's Truett Seminary and at Western Seminary, Portland. His books include, *Christian Theology*, *God in Three Persons*, and *The Word Became Flesh*. Heflin has formerly taught homiletics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and has co-authored *Proclaiming the Word*. Both authors wrestle with what Erickson calls "the problematic status of preaching today." (13).

In their academic settings, the authors are aware that some scholars believe that preaching is irrelevant due to the changing ways people listen. Attention spans have become shorter, learning has become more visually oriented, and people expect to participate more. Old style preaching can be passive and appear to the contemporary person as authoritarian. However, they maintain their stance on the importance of preaching as a biblical mandate, and believe that doctrinal preaching can transcend cultural changes to provide foundational support for the church during this time of change.

The authors believe that doctrine is essential to our relationship with God and definitive of the Christian church. It is prominent in the Bible and in Church history. Effective doctrinal preaching provides stability and identity to the church. With many contemporary churches focusing upon being "consumer friendly", there is an ever present danger the church will lose its uniqueness. The authors consider the consequences of other religions becoming consumer friendly by emphasizing experience and personal health? They inquire, how will one distinguish the doctrines of other religions from that of Christianity if the contemporary church has failed to teach the difference?

The authors believe that doctrine is found throughout the Bible, and they provide ample descriptions of exegetical techniques. These techniques focus on the didactic and narrative passages and help the reader transform doctrine from the original situation to a practical contemporary meaning. They suggest effective ways to utilize expository preaching through creative use of topical preaching, narrative preaching, and dramatic preaching. This book also includes chapters on planning, strategizing, and ways to assess congregational needs.

The authors do an excellent job of communicating some very difficult cultural nuances resulting from changes in our society today. They confront controversial issues with optimism and courage. This book is for preachers and those involved in Christian missions who are concerned with the lack of doctrine being promoted in contemporary worship. The book's wide variety of expository techniques and preaching methods will adapt to many styles and situations. This flexibility allows the articulation of doctrine to continue in an era of dynamic change, and, thus, prevent the church from losing its identity as it adapts to a new world.

Kenneth L. Duffee



**Philip E. Johnson, *Defeating Darwinism*, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997, pp. 131, pb.**

This book is a passionate and articulate attack on materialistic naturalism, especially as expressed in various aspects of society in the USA. The author sees the lynch-pin of this dominant ideology is the Darwinian theory of evolution. Given this starting point, Johnson's strategy for defeating materialistic naturalism is to defeat Darwinism, and his method is to 'open minds'.

In attempting to 'open minds' Johnson has good things to say about exposing the weaknesses in the arguments used to support a materialistic and naturalistic interpretation of evolution in his chapter 'Turning Up Your Baloney Detector'. He also makes some valid points in the chapter 'A Real Education in Evolution', though this is spoilt by some superficial arguments. For example, that there are different opinions about the mechanism of evolution does not show that the theory is in trouble - only that the mechanism is more complex than Darwin thought. Johnson is unaware of the work on 'selector genes' which is opening up a new way of understanding the mechanism, which can include the existing insights.

If Johnson means what he says about opening minds, he will not mind me turning my 'baloney detector' on his book. He says that when people here the word 'evolution' in television science programs their baloney detectors should display "Snow Job Alert". The same should be true when you read the word 'evolution' in his book. His constant assumption that it is inseparable from a materialistic naturalism is untrue both historically and philosophically. A.R. Wallace, who arrived at the theory of evolution by natural selection independently of Darwin and at about the same time, believed in a directive divine mind behind the process. D. Livingstone<sup>1</sup> has shown that in the late 19th century many conservative evangelical scholars, especially those in the Reformed tradition, had no difficulty in accepting evolution as the method God used in bringing living creatures into existence. Johnson implies that such a view is inevitably deistic. It is not. The Reformed scholars understood God as upholding, and working through, all the processes of nature -not as 'a remote First Cause who establishes the scientific laws and thereafter leaves nature to its own devices' (p.16).

In fact, Johnson's view of God's relationship to nature seems to be a semi-deistic one. The book is pervaded by the assumption that belief in God as Creator (which he calls belief in 'intelligent design') is only possible if there are aspects of living organisms which scientists cannot explain. This is theologically unsound for three reasons. Firstly, it is a form of semi-deism. Parts of nature are apparently 'left to their own devices' (so he accepts microevolution), while in other parts God has had to intervene to do things which nature could not if 'left to its own devices'. Secondly, it implies a semi-competent God, one who could not design a world in which 'things can make themselves'<sup>2</sup>. A more biblical view (prompted, for example, by Ps. 104) is a thorough-going theism which sees God as the transcendent Creator who is also intimately involved in his creation moment by moment, upholding and working thorough the laws he has put in place. In this view the processes of nature are seen as the seamless cloth of the Creator's activity. Thirdly, Johnson's project flies in the face of Jesus' example. He seems to want to prove the existence of a Creator by producing evidence of supernatural acts of creation. When

Jesus was asked (on three occasions) to prove who he was by doing some supernatural 'sign', he refused.

Johnson's argument is also scientifically unsound. He relies heavily on the work of the biochemist Michael Behe<sup>3</sup>, who claims that certain biochemical systems are 'irreducibly complex', *i.e.* they are made up of many parts that interact in complex ways, and all the parts need to work together. Hence, he finds it incredible that they could have come into existence by a gradual process, such as Darwinian evolution requires. In his book Behe castigates biochemists for not attempting evolutionary explanations for such systems, implying this is because none are possible. Here he is wrong, because work has been done on some of these systems, as Cavalier-Smith points out in his review of Behe's book in *Trends in Ecology and Evolution*, Vol.12, 1997. This reliance on 'irreducibly complex systems may well turn out to be another example of the 'God of the gaps' apologetic that will back-fire. As the gaps in scientific knowledge close, so the need for God will seem to disappear again.

Much is made by Johnson, quite rightly, of the difference between 'information' and the material substrate that conveys it. He is right to stress that the rise of meaningful information by a meaningless process it is a major problem for materialistic naturalism. However, the input of such information into a natural process does not necessarily require that there be gaps in it, as he seems to assume. The proposals of John Polkinghorne and Arthur Peacocke regarding how God may act in the world through the input of 'active information' show this<sup>4</sup>.

Basically, Johnson's strategy is misguided. Rather than trying to discredit materialistic naturalism by attacking evolution, he should attack it directly. True, evolution is used by some to prop up their materialistic naturalism, but the answer to that is to show how evolution can be understood with the context of a thorough-going Christian theism.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> D. Livingstone, *Darwin's Forgotten Defenders*, Eerdmans, 1987.

<sup>2</sup> To quote a phrase used by Archbishop Frederick Temple in Bampton Lectures of 1885.

<sup>3</sup> M. Behe, *Black Box*, Free Press, 1996.

<sup>4</sup> See J. Polkinghorne, *Scientists as Theologians*, SPCK, 1996, 36f.

Ernest C. Lucas, Bristol Baptist College, England

**Siang-Yang Tan, *Managing Chronic Pain*, Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996. 130 pp., paper, \$9.99.**

Pain is a puzzling problem that can serve as a "gift" in warning us of more serious physical problems or in helping us to grow spiritually and emotionally.

The introduction to this book contains definitions of numerous types of pains, from chronic headaches to terminal illness, and their control by a variety of methods. The various kinds of pain and their control is illustrated by case studies and statistics.

Pain control by prescribed or non-prescription medication is widely practiced and available. The major method for pain control--medical, surgical, and spiritual--could be used as strategies for coping with pain more effectively.

A modified life style is also recommended if you are overworked. Proper nutrition without overeating is important for healthy living. Challenging and changing distorted thinking leads to living more effectively with your condition and learning to cope better with the symptoms of pain.

Specially gifted Christians have the spiritual gift of healing apart from the use of natural means. We can pray for physical and inner healing as part of the ministry to which Jesus has called us, without forgetting the primacy of finding salvation through accepting Jesus as personal Savior.

You can pray for your problem with the right motive of seeking his will for you, without demanding anything. If God chooses not to heal you, you have to submit yourself to God's will with trust that God knows best and all things work for your good (Rom. 8:28).

Having enough faith does not guarantee physical healing. Christian meditation is not only detachment from the world but also attachment to the Word of God, finding meaning for suffering.

God can use pain to discipline us, but his love remains changeless. Sometimes pain is part of God's pruning work to produce more spiritual fruit. On other occasions suffering and pain are used to bring blessing and salvation to others.

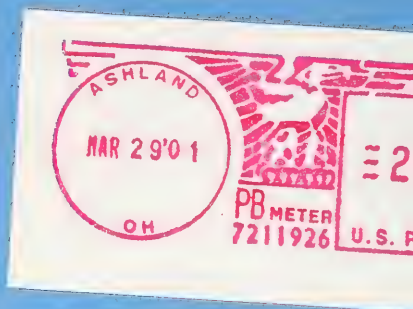
You can grow spiritually and develop mature character as a result of suffering. God will remain with you in this world full of pain and all things will work for your good. Nothing can separate us, not even pain, from the love of Jesus Christ.

Zoltan Kiraly, Lakeland, FL





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This beautiful autumn makes one rejoice in God's good creation, that of the physical world in which we live, and also the interpersonal one of relationships. Each year as an institution we are amazed anew at the grace of God in bringing new people, faculty, staff, administration, and most especially students, into our lives, for the enrichment of each one of us, and for the furtherance of God's kingdom. Thanks be to God.

This issue highlights the Seminary community by drawing on it for all major articles. We appreciate contributions from librarian, faculty, administration, and a MACPC student, William Meyer, who has completed his M.Div. degree here at Ashland. I trust that the mixture of academic and practical, biblical and theological, past and future oriented will provide support for your ministry, challenge for your mind, and most of all, encouragement for your soul. May you experience God's blessing in all things.

David W. Baker  
November 13, 2000



**Revelation 7:9-17: The Innumerable Crowd Before the One Upon the Throne and the Lamb<sup>1</sup>**

Russell Morton\*

Having survived the dire predictions of the so-called "Turn of the Millennium," which doesn't actually begin until 2001, relatively unscathed, perhaps it is time to reconsider John's message in Revelation. This is especially so in light of all the irresponsible excesses of some who managed to combine a gross misunderstanding of the nature of biblical prophecy in general, and apocalyptic in particular, with the more extreme warnings about the dangers of "Y2K."<sup>2</sup> Thus, we were inundated with predictions by cable preachers, and even cable channels, such as The Learning Channel, about how the so called turn of the millennium will usher in a new and more dreadful age. In 2000 the prophecies of Revelation or Nostradamus or Joe Prophet will be fulfilled, with great earthquakes, terrors, and even, perhaps before the year is out, the return of the Lord.

Yet do these people recall the explicit statement of Jesus in Mk 13:32, that neither the angels nor the Son of Man know the day or the hour of Christ's return? Are they also oblivious to Acts 1:7, where Jesus tells his disciples that it is not for them to know that day and hour that the kingdom is restored to Israel? Is this why they also grossly misrepresent the nature of biblical prophecy itself? For they substitute a concept of prophecy more suitable to the views of ancient astrologers, where it titillates the curiosity or provides a guide map through the future, for the biblical idea of proclamation of God's word to

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<sup>1</sup> A revision of an address originally delivered in the chapel of Ashland Theological Seminary Oct. 25, 1999. Quotations of the New Testament are my own translation.

<sup>2</sup>Incidentally, one might notice that it seems the more people are into predicting the end of the world, the more they employ "techno-speak" rather than plan English, talking of "Y2K" rather than the "Year 2000," as if computerize gives them credibility.

inform the life of the community. Thus, John's concern, to provide a word of comfort in the expectation of persecution,<sup>3</sup> is ignored.

The result is that the power of the Apocalypse is undermined. We are not exposed to its true message, which calls upon readers or hearers to decide between two opposing and irreconcilable claims. Will the readers submit to the rule of God and the Lamb, or will they be deceived by the vile parody of divine authority represented by Rome? Will they be a people who live in radical obedience to God, or will they perish with the rest of humanity? In the course of his vision, John provides us with a glimpse into heaven, of which Rev 7:9-17, like chs. 4-5 is an instance. As in the earlier chapters, John uses imagery derived from imperial court ritual, with its ceremony of universal acclamation, to indicate that, for the Christian, there can be no compromise. When we carefully observe these verses, especially in comparison with the claims of those who follow the Beast in Rev. 13 as well as the fate of those who accept the sign of the Beast in chs. 16 and 19, we find that while the bliss of the saints is described, something more is also at work. These verses are nothing less than subversive. They call upon readers to decide who is God. In this respect, they are of vital relevance for us today, when we are confronted with the idolatry of the state, or of consumerism, or of an ever-increasing GDP. These verses remind us that sovereignty ultimately belongs to God and the Lamb, and it is only as we are shepherded by the Lamb that we find our true rest. To accomplish this task, John: (1) employs common themes throughout Revelation to emphasize his message; (2) uses court ritual to show that whatever Rome and Caesar demand illegitimately belongs to God and Christ by right; and (3) reverses the usual standards of victory and defeat, to show that only in accepting the vocation of the Lamb of God are the people of God able to triumph and attain a secure place in God and Christ's eternal Kingdom.

### John Uses Common Themes in Revelation to Emphasize His Message.

Rev 7 constitutes an interlude between the opening of the sixth seal in 6:12-17 and the seventh seal in Rev. 8:1-5. In this interlude, two scenes are described, the sealing of the 144,000 in Rev. 7:1-8, and the great multitude

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<sup>3</sup> I agree with A. Yarbro Collins in Crisis and Catharsis: The Power of the Apocalypse (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 70, that, while John anticipates an impending persecution, at present there is not enough evidence to conclude that such persecution occurred in the reign of Domitian. Rather, John reflects the expectation of persecution more than persecution itself.

worshipping the One Sitting upon the throne and the Lamb in Rev. 7:9-17. Scholars are divided as to whether these are two distinct groups, or the same people described in different ways.<sup>4</sup> We need not concern ourselves with these somewhat arcane issues here. What is to be noticed is that throughout ch. 7 the reader or hearer is referred to both what precedes and what follows. The 144,000 of Rev. 7: 4-8 are referred to again in Rev 14:1-5.<sup>5</sup> Likewise, the sealing of the saints in Rev. 7:2-3 is demonically imitated or parodied by the Beast in Rev 13:16. In the same way, the great multitude before the throne of God and the Lamb is described earlier in Rev 5:9.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, just as the great multitude of 7:10 standing before the heavenly throne proclaim "Salvation," or, more accurately, "Victory,"<sup>7</sup> so we find a blasphemous echo in the acclamation of the nations in 13:4. When they behold the healing of one of the heads of the beast, they worship the dragon, and call out, "Who is similar

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<sup>4</sup> Those who say that these are two different groups include: R. W. Wall, Revelation (NIBC; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991) 118; G. R. Beasley-Murray, The Book of Revelation (NCBC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 139-140; W. Bousset, Die Offenbarung Johannis (KEK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1906), 287-290; D. E. Aune, Revelation (WBC 52; Dallas: Word, 1997-1999), 447. Among the scholars who hold that the two groups are identical are: I T. Beckwith, The Apocalypse of John: Studies in Introduction With a Critical and Exegetical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1967, c1919), 540; J. Roloff, Revelation (CC; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 98; R.C. Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John, vol. 1 (ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1920) 201 (where the innumerable multitude are the martyrs, who were sealed when alive in 7:4-8); G.K. Beale, The Book of Revelation (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 426-430.

<sup>5</sup> That they are likely the same group, see Charles, 1:202-203; Aune, Revelation, 460; Beale, 416-423.

<sup>6</sup> R. Bauckham, The Climax of Prophecy (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993), 215; D. Aune, "The Influence of Roman Imperial Court Ceremonial on the Apocalypse of John," BR 28 (1983) 5-26; Beal, 426, etc.

<sup>7</sup> W. Foerster, "σῶζω, κτλ," TDNT, 7:997-998; G. B. Caird, The Revelation of St. John the Divine (HNTC; New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 100; Aune, Revelation 6-16, 470.



to the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" Yet, it is not the beast that is triumphant and victorious. It is the Lamb who conquers, and is the true benefactor of his followers.

In short, John, speaking to the readers of his day, demonstrates that the rule of the beast, far from being impressive, is merely a sham. It gains its credibility only to the extent that it imitates the true victory of God and Christ. Like the Lamb who was slain in ch 5, one of the heads of the beast is as slain to death, but is healed. As the heavenly multitude adores the Lamb in chs 5 and 7, so the inhabitants of the earth follow after the sign of the healing of the head of the beast. Yet, the true domain of each is demonstrated in John's description. The Lamb and God inhabit heaven. Their reign is eternal. The beast is earthly, inspired by the dragon which emerges from the sea, which symbolizes chaos.<sup>8</sup> Likewise, the nations share the fate of the beast, which is ultimately cast into the lake of fire, along with its lord, the Devil (Rev 20:7-9). On the other hand, the description of the saints in Rev. 7:10, 13 anticipates their participation in the victory of the Rider in Rev. 19:11-16. In both cases the clothing of the heavenly multitude is described as white, which in Revelation is not so much the color of purity as it is of victory and conquest.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the Lamb in 7:17 and the rider in 19:15 are said to shepherd their people. Thus, the Lamb is identified with the victorious Rider, who bears the title "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," which the Roman emperor, represented in the figure of the beast, ascribes to himself.

Yet, the contrast between the fate of the victorious saints in heaven and the earth bound worshippers of the beast does not end here. In Rev. 7:16 we see the promise of Isa. 49:10 quoted, that the followers of the Lamb, "will not hunger, nor will they thirst nor will the sun fall upon them nor any heat." This picture contrasts sharply with the portrayal of the fourth bowl in Rev. 16:8-9, where the sun is struck and burns the inhabitants of the earth, who then blaspheme the name of God. In short, in both their devotion to God and in their fate the saints are contrasted with those who refuse to acknowledge God and Christ.

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<sup>8</sup> See A. Yarbro Collins, The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation (HDR 9; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976).

<sup>9</sup> See the description of the first horse and rider in Rev. 6:2. Also see, D.L. Barr, Tales of the End: A Narrative Commentary on the Book of Revelation (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge Press, 1998) 9, 74.

Yet, while there is much in Rev. 7:9-17 that is echoed in other parts of the Apocalypse, John also uses other imagery, which eludes many of today's readers. The reason is because John incorporates imagery from court ritual to demonstrate further that all that Rome claims illegitimately belongs to God and Christ by right. Thus, Rome's pomp and ceremony is achieved only through borrowing and misusing scenes of heavenly splendor. Readers are, therefore, reminded not to be deceived by majesty of Rome, for they serve an even more magnificent Lord. John's use of this imagery will now be discussed briefly.

### Use of Court Ritual

In both Rev 5 and 7 John incorporates imagery, which would have been very familiar to those who knew court ritual, especial in cities like Ephesus and Pergamum, where the imperial cult was especially strong.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, it was not unusual for rulers to be acclaimed as gods in the eastern Mediterranean, especially in Hellenistic cities.<sup>11</sup> This status was ascribed to victorious Roman generals, and likewise was bestowed upon visiting Roman emperors.<sup>12</sup> Thus, John, as well as his readers, would have been in a position to have witnessed this ritual in the context of civic life in Asia Minor. It is, therefore, no accident that the Seer picks up such imagery in his description of the heavenly court. By so doing he directs the focus of his readers or hearers away from the pomp of civic ceremony, which makes such strong claims upon believers, but with which he allows no compromise.<sup>13</sup> Participation in the trade

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<sup>10</sup>See R.E. Oster, "Ephesus," ABD 2:544-545; on Pergamum see Aune, Revelation, 180-181.

<sup>11</sup> D. E. Aune, "The Influence of Imperial Court Ceremonial on the Book of Revelation," 16.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> See John's condemnation of "Jezebeel" (2:20-23) in the letter to Thyatira, and those holding to the teaching of Balaam (2:14-15) in the letter to Pergamum. See Yarbrow Collins, Crisis and Catharsis, 87-88, as well as W.M. Ramsay, The Letters to the Seven Churches (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1985, c1904), 298-301.

guilds, which require some allegiance to the patron deities or imperial cult, is ruled out.<sup>14</sup>

There are two aspects of our verses, which, in particular, are reminiscent of imperial court ritual. First, the Seer observes that a great multitude from every nation standing before the divine throne. This imagery is similar to the concept of universal consensus, whereby the Roman emperor, upon accession, is bestowed a certain legitimacy. As representative of the empire, the acclamation of an emperor by the senate was considered the acclamation of all the peoples of the empire. This feature is also demonstrated on imperial coins, especially those of Nero, which in the last year of his reign bore the inscription, which translated means, "The security of the people of Rome."<sup>15</sup> This claim, and others like it, are shown in 7:9-10 to be a blasphemous parody of the saints' acclamation of, "Victory to our God sitting upon the Throne and to the Lamb." Security, ultimately, is not found in the person of the emperor, but in God and Christ.

Furthermore, the senatorial ceremony of universal acclamation is shown to be a sham imitation of the true glory given to God and the Lamb. While the senate pretends to bestow universal acclamation to the emperor, God and the Lamb actually receive it, from every nation and tribe and people and tongue. Rome may have incorporated and conquered many peoples, but their numbers fade into insignificance in comparison with the even greater multitude which proclaim their victory in God and Christ.

Another aspect of imperial court ritual echoed in our text is also found in 4:8, 11; 5:9-10; 11:15 and elsewhere. That is the hymn of praise to God and Christ given by the multitude. As early as Julius Caesar, "claims to divinity and encouragement of divine honors were part of the imperial program."<sup>16</sup> While few such acclamations survive, it does appear that Roman emperors, borrowing from the ceremonies of the Greek rulers of Asia Minor, used hymns with antiphonal responses.<sup>17</sup> We find a similar phenomenon in Rev. 7:9-12. In 7:10, there is the acclamation of victory, similar to that at the emperor's accession to the throne. In Rev. 7:12, there is the response. By this means the Seer shows

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<sup>14</sup> See, Ramsay, The Letters to the Seven Churches, 346-353.

<sup>15</sup> Aune, "Imperial Court Ritual," 18-19.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>17</sup> Aune, Revelation, 316.



that for Christians, their allegiance and loyalty belongs not to the blasphemous claims of the emperor or Rome, but to the Creator of the Universe, and his designated agent who has achieved victory. Rome and Caesar claim illegitimately what belongs only to God and Christ by right. The people of God are called to recognize this fact, and act accordingly, by not submitting to imperial claims.

Yet, if Christians are challenged to recognize that their Lord is not Caesar, but the true victor, Christ, so too are they challenged to redefine the character of victory. Is it to be understood in the militaristic terms of Rome? Is it triumphal? Or is it something else? Just as John demonstrates that the claims of Rome are false, and but a sham and demonic imitation of the allegiance, glory and praise which belongs to God and Christ alone, So does he transform our understanding of victory. For victory is not found in military conquest, but in adopting the vocation of the Lamb, by becoming obedient until death.

### Reversal of the Usual Standards of Victory

One of the truly remarkable features about the Book of Revelation is, for all of its violent and disturbing imagery; it does not call upon Christians to prepare for military conflict. While the heavenly armies descend upon God's enemies, led by the one riding a white horse (Rev. 19:11-15), no battle is actually described. Unlike the War Scroll of the Dead Sea Scrolls,<sup>18</sup> there is no order of battle. There is no call to take up arms. We are simply told in 19:17-18 that one angel standing in the sun summons the birds to the great banquet of God. While we hear much in popular literature about the "Battle of Armageddon," in fact it is more like the "victorious non-battle against the opponents of God."

Yet, such a phenomenon is only fitting, for John's vision is constantly surprising us with its mutation of images. Thus, the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah" of 5:5, becomes the Lamb standing as slain (5:6). The saints are victorious in 7:10, but only to the extent that they come out of, that is, endure the tribulation and wash their garments white in the blood of the Lamb. While the imagery of the cleansing power of sacrificial blood is found in the OT (see Isa 1:18; 64:6; Zech. 3:3-5),<sup>19</sup> the vivid character of the description is,

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<sup>18</sup> 1QM 5:3-6:17

<sup>19</sup> Beale, 436.

nevertheless, striking. If this is not enough, as we proceed Rev 12:10-11 tells us of a great voice in heaven, which proclaims:

Now has come the salvation [or victory] and power  
And kingdom of our God  
And the authority of His Christ  
Because the accuser of our brothers and sisters is cast out  
The one accusing them before God day and night.  
And they conquered him through the blood of the Lamb  
And on account of the word of their witness  
And they did not love their lives until death

Conquest is achieved, but not through power. Nor is it the result of an exercise of raw military force on the part of the saints. Instead, like Christ they have endured wrongful accusation and death. Yet, God will vindicate them when they, like Christ, are raised.<sup>20</sup> When God's time is accomplished, he will answer the prayer of those portrayed in the fifth seal of 6:9-11, who are asking how long will it be until their blood is avenged. God is faithful, and will act. But the point of Revelation is that the victory is ultimately God's, not ours. The readers cannot take up the same weapons as Rome. For despite its arrogance, Rome will be judged. At the point when it assumes it achieves victory, in the death of Christians, it assures its own defeat. A defeat sealed, not by a lion or an eagle, but a Lamb, even a Lamb that was slain.

### Conclusion

Yet, as we read this passage, what does all this mean for us? First, we notice that the human heart hasn't changed in two thousand years. If anything, the secular state of the twentieth century has claimed more lives, and has made even more blasphemous claims than Rome ever did. What was hailed at its beginnings as the "Christian Century" has, instead been the "Century of Warfare" (as one video series calls it), or, perhaps more accurately, the "Century of Genocide." Whether it be the Turks slaughtering Armenians in the first years of the twentieth century, to the Holocaust, to the millions slaughtered in the purges of the former Soviet Union or the "Great Leap Forward" in China, to the massacres in the Balkans and Africa today. The State claims ultimate obedience, and those who don't fit in, which is becoming more and more the case with Christians in this post Christian age, become not human beings but

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<sup>20</sup>. Beale, 664.

eggs. In this context, "you can't make an omelet without breaking eggs" seems a favorite slogan.

Against these claims, John calls on Christians to say an emphatic "No." We are not to resist with the same weapons as our opponents.<sup>21</sup> This view seems foolish. Yet, even in living memory, whether it be the Civil Rights Movement led by Dr. King's principles of non-violence, or the collapse of the Soviet Empire, when Christians stand prayerfully against systematic evil, great things can be accomplished. Perhaps not it will not be according to our timetable of instant gratification, but it will be in the time decreed by the Sovereignty of God. We are disturbed by this state of affairs, and in many respects none of us, not even the Seer, are able to give a satisfactory answer. Yet, we are called to radical obedience, radical faith, in a radical, and ultimately subversive Gospel. It is then that we also receive the promise of Rev. 7:17,

That the Lamb in the midst of the throne will shepherd them,  
And will lead them to the living waters.  
And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

### Abbreviations

#### Biblical Books

Isa.	Isaiah
Rev .	Revelation
Zech.	Zechariah

#### Dead Sea Scrolls

1QM	War Scroll.
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#### Secondary Sources

ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary
<u>BR</u>	<u>Biblical Research</u>
CC	Continental Commentaries
<u>EQ</u>	<u>Evangelical Quarterly</u>

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<sup>21</sup> For applications of this theme to a Christian pacifist agenda, see J.L. Coker, "Peace and the Apocalypse: Stanley Hauerwas and Miroslav Volf on the Eschatological Basis for Christian Nonviolence," EQ 71 (1999), 261-268. While I do not necessarily agree with such a position, an interesting combination of themes of Christian eschatology with a realistic appraisal of human nature is provided.



HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion
HNTC	Harper New Testament Commentaries
ICC	International Critical Commentary
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (Meyer Kommentar)
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
NIBC	New International Bible Commentary
NIGNTC	New International Greek New Testament Commentary
TDNT	<u>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</u>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary

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## **The Changeless Gospel<sup>1</sup>**

Luke Keefer\*

The most difficult thing about change is knowing what changes are good, to know how much change is good, and to know which things should not change. When individuals encounter too much change they become mentally ill. When cultures change too much they lose their identity. When churches change too much the faith becomes corrupt.

So, strange as it might seem, the best way to manage change is to have something that does not change. We can think of the human body as an illustration of what I mean. Doctors tell us that thousands of our body cells are dying each day and are replaced by new cells. Yet we remain the same person in spite of all these cell changes. There is a genetic-code (our DNA) within us that gets transferred to each new cell.

Think of the chaos that would result if this were not true. Oriental people might slowly change into Westerners. Men might slowly become women. Or we might all turn into dogs or cats, birds or fish. And think of a student who spent four years in a school and came to the examination in mathematics and found that his new brain cells only remembered contemporary music! But these things do not happen to us, because something within is not changed by all the changes that are occurring in our bodies.

This leads us to ask what is the genetic code of the church? Is there a spiritual DNA which will preserve the church even as it changes its ministry for a world which will be much different a few decades from now?

I think the answer to this question is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We know that Luke wrote two books: a Gospel and the Book of Acts. The Gospel of Luke (and here we could say of Matthew, Mark and John, as well) is the story of salvation which must never change. It is the substance of our faith, the core of our preaching, the measure of truth and life. If we try to change the gospel account, faith becomes sick and the church becomes weak.

The Book of Acts, by way of contrast, shows how this gospel held fast in the midst of a church and a world which changed much. In fact, if the church had not changed the gospel would have lost its power. I want to

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<sup>1</sup>The substance of this article was first presented in a series of lectures in South Korea on the topic of "The Church's Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century."

emphasize the changeless character of the gospel: what must not change in the 21<sup>st</sup> or any other century if the church is to have a healthy identity and ministry.

## **Lessons from Church History: Changes that Compromised the Gospel**

### The Constantinian Church (4<sup>th</sup> Century A.D.)

Jesus had told his disciples that life in the church was to be based upon his example of servant leadership. He specifically told his disciples that they were not to build power structures like rulers in gentile governments did (Mark 10:35-45). Yet when Constantine called himself a Christian, the governing patterns of the church became a copy of the Roman Empire.

Over time a religious hierarchy developed with supreme power vested in the bishop of Rome. Clergy became a distinct class of people separate from the laity. They wore different clothing and were allowed into “sacred places” in the church where ordinary Christians were not allowed to go. The gospel suffered because the concept of the “priesthood of all believers” was lost. The church began to teach that ordinary people could not come directly to God through Jesus Christ. They would now need a religious person of power (a priest) to help them connect with God’s salvation.

Worship was vastly changed. It was moved from homes, where it largely was held in the first three centuries, to special buildings designed for church services. The new churches built from the 4<sup>th</sup> century onward were copied from Roman buildings for civilian government. The “churches” were to be where the entire population could have religion, rather than a company of believers gathering in the informality and the fellowship of a Christian household.

Soon the new churches were made ornate, a place where the wealthy and the powerful could feel comfortable. Trained musicians replaced congregational singing. Clergy entered in a processional, dressed in priestly clothing. The service became highly structured in liturgy and ritual. Gone was the simple service of the fishermen of Galilee. Rome had all but smothered the jubilant faith of the early Christians.

Christianity became joined to the Roman government; the church and the State would cooperate in building a Christian society. Christianity became part of Roman culture. One became a Christian as part of the social heritage rather than by a considerate choice of faith.

Strange as it might seem, the Church tried to adjust the gospel to accommodate all these changes. It did so by ignoring the teaching of Jesus and going to the Old Testament for its authority. There they found a sacred kingship, a sacred priesthood, and a sacred temple with elaborate ritual and ornate worship. This was a model for empire Christianity rather than of a

Savior of sinners who died on a Roman cross at the hands of the Roman military.

In the first three centuries of the church, the gospel demonstrated its power to save in spite of the opposition of the Roman government. But when the Roman government tried to be the friend of the church, the gospel was in greater danger than when the government was the church's enemy.

As the church enters the next century we must remember this lesson. Persecuting governments will be a problem for the church and its ministry. But friendly governments are also a snare for the church, because their influence is so subtle. No government is happy with the Christian confession that "Jesus is Lord," for that means that governments have only limited power, an idea that politicians will hardly accept. If we want to preach the gospel of Christ to all nations, we must be careful that we do not wrap the flag of our country around the Bible.

#### The Crusading Church (1095-1291 A.D.)

Jesus was the Prince of Peace. He did not kill his enemies to protect his own life. Rather he died to save all people, including the enemies who put him to death.

Jesus taught his disciples to forgive as he forgave, to love as he loved, and to seek peace as He sought peace. Christians were not to hate their personal enemies nor the people outside their race or nation. Christians were never to kill, not even for the sake of Christ and the gospel.

When the Western Church decided to send armies to Palestine to capture Christian holy places from Islamic control, all this teaching and example of Jesus was forgotten. Christian armies killed Muslims and Jews because they did not confess faith in Christ. A Christian sword replaced the gospel in the Western confrontation with Judaism and Islam.

Today the period of the crusades is seen as one of the worst chapters in Christian history. When Jewish and Islamic people remember this history, it is hard for them to believe the gospel of salvation through Jesus.

What happened in the crusades has been repeated in nearly every war that has involved Christian people. It is very difficult for countries that have sent out armies to other lands to later send out Christian missionaries to the same countries. When people carry a gun one time and the Bible the next, it is difficult to believe they are Jesus' people filled with love for the lost.

Think of the case of the United States in this matter. Native American Indians have trouble accepting the gospel preached by North American missionaries. For more than two hundred years, white men took land from the Indians, killed them in large numbers, and greatly mistreated them. Now Indians think of the gospel as the white man's religion, and they don't believe



in it. The same is true of other nations our country has opposed in war: Germany, Japan, Vietnam, Iraq, to name just a few. U.S. missionaries are not having much success in these countries.

South Korea is fortunate in that its military, apart from the Korean War at mid-century, has not been involved in warfare against neighboring countries. I sincerely hope the political problems with North Korea can be solved at the peace table. It will make gospel witness in North Korea so much easier to accomplish.

For we must remember the lessons of the Crusading Church. The ministry of the gospel suffers when we try to carry guns along with our Bibles.

### The Enlightenment Church (18th-20th Century A.D.)

In response to rationalization and scientific trends in Europe, especially in the eighteenth century, the Western Church accommodated the gospel to the spirit of the times. It agreed to call large segments of Scripture "myth," and gave up such theological foundations as the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the sinful nature of humanity, the atonement of Christ, and the doctrine of hell. It rejected the biblical record of creation and the accounts of miracles throughout the Bible.

In this compromise, Christianity became just one of the historic religions identified with Western culture. The gospel was no longer God's saving truth for all peoples of the earth. Consequently it was believed that missions should be discontinued around the world except for schools, hospitals, and social ministries.

It hardly needs saying that this type of secular humanism has been a problem for the church up to the present. For it represents a dangerous idolatry: humans creating God according to their own image. It results in religion without mystery, worship without feeling, and life without eternity. This is Christianity without Jesus as the Son of God and Savior of humanity.

### The Media Church (Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century)

The media church is hard to describe because it includes everything from very conservative Christianity to quite liberal Christianity. It includes more traditional forms of worship, but it also has a lot of charismatic worship patterns. So the particular danger for the gospel depends upon the theology of the group using the media.

What I am thinking about are the problems presented by contemporary electronic media to the church. Media aim for a large audience, so tend to be overly concerned with what the customers want to hear, rather than what Scripture says we need to proclaim.

Media depend upon maximum effectiveness of very small sound bites.

So there is a tendency to play upon the sensational aspects of Christianity rather than the things of substance. Media tend to develop an audience with unquestioned allegiance to a popular preacher rather than a commitment to a fellowship of believers. In other words, media become substitutes for the church, and discipleship fails to occur since discipleship depends upon intimate relationships and sustained instruction.

There is no question that media will continue to develop in the next century. And the church should use media. But the church must be careful that the media approach does not wrap the gospel into too small a package. We must declare all the truth of the gospel. And media must be supplemented by many other ministries of the church if the gospel is to be heard in all its fulness.

### Luke-Acts: The Enduring Gospel

Luke's Gospel tells the full story of Jesus from his miraculous birth to his resurrection, ascension, and the promise of Pentecost. In chapters 1-4, Jesus and his mission is introduced. The birth narratives, his baptism by John the Baptist, his genealogy, his temptation in the wilderness, and his message at his hometown of Nazareth are all used to show that Jesus was the promised Messiah of Israel, the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies about salvation. But he comes as more than the Jews were expecting, for he is none other than God in human flesh.

In chapters 5-21, Luke tells of Jesus' ministry on earth. He recounts Jesus' teaching, his miracles, and his efforts to prepare his disciples for the building of his Church. It is the largest section of the book and covers a wide range of topics, but at the heart of the stories is his mission to save sinners (especially chapter 15).

Then chapters 22-24 cover his crucifixion and his resurrection. These incidents are not only the climax to the story of his life, they are also the foundation stones of the church: the gospel message focuses upon Jesus crucified and resurrected, the Savior to all who put their trust in him.

If we want to avoid the mistakes the church has made in the past, then we must cover all the topics of the twenty-four chapters of Luke. We dare not reduce the gospel to just those stories that we like or just those doctrines that are easy to understand in a particular culture. Just as Bible translators translate the whole Bible, so must the church's ministers preach and teach the entire gospel.

Luke's treatise, called the Acts of the Apostles, details the beginning of the church in Jerusalem and its expansion as far as Rome. The church in Acts changed its practices to fit the culture of the people where the church was being planted. But the church did not change its message when it took the gospel to new places. The outline of the sermons recorded in Acts is very

similar to the points established in Luke's gospel.

C.H. Dodd carefully studied the early sermons in Acts and summarized their main points. They can be summarized as follows:

- a. The age of fulfillment has arrived in which the Old Testament prophecies about Christ are being realized.
- b. This has taken place through the ministry of Christ's life and death.
- c. By virtue of his resurrection, Jesus has been exalted at the right hand of God, the Messianic head of a new Israel.
- d. The Holy Spirit is a sign of Christ's present power and glory.
- e. The Messianic Age will shortly be completed with the return of Christ.
- f. Therefore, people should repent of their sin and receive the promise of salvation for the present and the age to come.<sup>2</sup>

We see then that the church's message after Jesus and in places outside of Jerusalem remained the same. Time and place did not affect the content of the gospel.

We hear much today about "preaching in the language of the people" who make up our audience. And, from the standpoint of good communication, that is a valid point. However, there is a right way and a wrong way to "preach in the language of the people." The right way is basically the art of translation. Not only must we translate the gospel into the language of a particular ethnic group, we must also translate the language of our preaching into the linguistic sub-groups within a culture (for example, youth, scholars, workers, etc.). But our focus in translating is to find words that faithfully convey the meaning of the gospel story. In the right way, the original story remains unchanged. Only the words change.

The wrong way to "preach in the language of the people" changes both the story and the words. Then we are not merely translating the gospel; we are guilty of changing the gospel so that it says something different. We can use fancy terms for these changes, like "cultural sensitivity," "indigenization," or "contemporary hermeneutics," but the fact remains that we are not preaching the same gospel as we find in Luke and Acts.

The church in Acts translated the gospel into several new languages, but it kept the gospel story as it was given by Jesus in the Gospel of Luke. In other words, the church engaged in translation but not in reinterpretation. They succeeded in preaching the gospel in the language of the people. That, in part,

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<sup>2</sup>C.H. Dodd, The Apostolic Preaching and Its Development (London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1936) 21-24.



is the larger concept of speaking in tongues in the Book of Acts. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit they convincingly related the gospel which had transformed their lives into new languages for people in the Mediterranean world who did not speak "Hebrew."

### **Application to Ministry in the Twenty-First Century**

There are many voices in the contemporary world (outside the church and sadly inside the church, too) that advise the church to change its message. Some do so because they are impatient with traditional Christianity. Again, some want the church to downplay salvation and the age to come and think primarily about political, economic, and social conditions of the present time. Others want us to give up the claim that Jesus is the only way to salvation. In the name of globalization, they want us to put Jesus on equal status with Buddha, Confucius, and Mohammed, all teachers of different religions.

I have tried in this lecture to show several reasons why we should not change the gospel we teach.

The early church did not change the gospel when it went to different places. Rather, the gospel kept the church true to its identity as it went into many different cultures.

Various examples from church history show what happened when the church did change its message. In every case, the church became sick and its ministries became weak. We know too well the danger of changing the gospel.

A church that dares to be faithful to the gospel has two great benefits. First, Jesus will reward those people when he returns to rule and reign. And, second, the church that holds to the gospel will have a powerful ministry. In Acts, the authorities, both religious and political, wanted the apostles to stop preaching in Jesus' name. But they said, "We must obey God, rather than men" (Acts 5:29). They prayed for boldness in their witness and preached Jesus in spite of persecution. And the early church grew not only in numbers, but in commitment, worship, and devotion as well. We often say we admire the early church and long to be like them in power and devotion. But to be like them we must take our stance with them on the truth of the gospel.

In eighteenth century England, John Wesley found that many people opposed his gospel ministry. The Enlightenment Church of his day felt the gospel story was out of date. They urged Wesley to be more rational in his religion. But Wesley took his stand on the truth of the gospel as recorded in the Bible. And he and his helpers had such success that they saved the nation from sinking into a loss of the Christian faith. Methodism changed the nation through the preaching of the gospel. If Wesley had listened to his critics, we would never have heard of him in history. It was the gospel that made Wesley

able to stand in a world that was quickly changing.

We live and minister in a world that is changing quickly and much. But God has given the church a genetic code, a particular DNA, which gives us an identity in a world that is losing its face, and a mission in a world that is losing its way. That genetic code is the gospel, which has endured from the first to the twenty-first century. It is a gospel that has endured the journey from Jerusalem to Seoul, and transforms believers into Christians in recently evangelized countries as it did in Palestine. And God only knows where the path of the gospel goes as it stretches out from the younger churches to the unreached people in our world. But we do know that wherever Korean Christians proclaim the gospel, people will come to know the God who redeems and transforms sinners into the image of Jesus Christ.

**Fixing Boundaries**  
**The Construction of Identity in Joshua**  
L. Daniel Hawk\*

Possession of the promised land, obedience to the commands of Moses, and the extermination of the peoples of the land constitute the primary themes which configure the book of Joshua. Although there has been common agreement that these themes function to establish a sense of national identity, attempts to describe how they do so have been frustrated by the contradictory perspectives they present. Claims that Israel "took all the land" vie with assertions that vast tracts of the land must still be possessed. Demonstrations of Israel's precise execution of divine commands conflict with episodes that depict Israelites breaking the commandments of Moses and YHWH. And reports that the Israelites slaughtered "everything that breathed" are opposed by stories which relate the survival of the peoples of the land.

These conflicting perspectives have often been explained in terms of the Joshua's complex compositional history. That is, the tensions are seen as a consequence of a process in which multiple editors commented on and modified source materials or earlier versions of the book. While it offers an attractive scenario, this approach conveniently sidesteps the vexing difficulties that arise from the canonical form of the text. If Joshua aims to construct a national identity for Israel, why does it continually undercut those themes which seem to reinforce Israel's distinctive character?

The ambivalent presentation of these themes in Joshua suggests that the book is not so much advancing as it is working through issues of identity. Motifs of land, kinship, and religious observance articulate common ethnic signifiers. Each is repeatedly presented and tested as the story moves from beginning to end, but none finally proves to be a definitive mark of national identity. Enclaves of Canaanites, as well as Israelites living east of the Jordan, belie the notion that Israel the nation can closely associated with the land west of the Jordan. Repeated infractions of the commandments illustrate that obedience does not essentially characterize Israel. The incorporation of indigenous peoples on the one hand, and the extermination of an Israelite family on the other, reveal that a sense of blood relatedness does not essentially define the nation. By subverting notions of identity along these lines, Joshua lays the foundation for the presentation of an alternative vision of Israel. The final section of the book (Josh 22-24) advances this vision by recasting identity in terms of loyalty and decision. In short, Joshua is a carefully crafted narrative

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which detaches Israelite identity from ideologies of land, kinship, and practice and presents Israel as a nation constituted by reciprocal choices

### Conquest

The first major section of Joshua (Josh 2-12) raises the issue of national identity by introducing three reports of conquest by three stories that depict encounters with Canaan. Scenes of Israel and Canaan on the individual level thereby balance scenes of Israel and Canaan on the corporate level. The story of Rahab and the spies (2:1-25) encloses Israel's victory over the inhabitants of Jericho, the story of Achan (7:1-26) precedes the conquest of Ai, and the story of the Gibeonites' ruse (9:1-27) sets the backdrop for the rout of a Canaanite coalition. A common structure and themes unite the three campaigns. In the first and third campaigns (at Jericho and Gibeon), YHWH brings miraculous victories, even though Israel has made pacts with indigenous inhabitants of the land. The middle scenario (at Ai) reverses elements of the others and connects a disastrous defeat with an act of duplicity. In this case, Israel achieves victory only after excising the disobedience members from the community and meticulously following YHWH's directions. Taken together, the three campaigns form a narrative triptych which joins issues of inclusion and exclusion to those of obedience and disobedience.<sup>1</sup>

Each anecdote raises the issue of identity by telling a story which involves the discovery of what is hidden. Rahab hides the spies, Achan hides plunder, and the Gibeonites conceal their identities. In each case, concealment leads eventually to exposure, and once "exposed" the characters engage in remarkable self-disclosure. Rahab reveals her knowledge of YHWH and her motives for hiding the spies (2:9-13), Achan confesses his theft and reveals the location of the plunder items (7:19-21), and the Gibeonites admit that they live within the land and not far away (9:16, 22-24). This in turn leads to a decision which challenges the nation's internal boundaries. Rahab and the Gibeonites, who have given glory to YHWH while Israelites have remained silent, are incorporated into the community (6:25; 9:27). Achan, pedigreed insider, admits that he has brought a Canaanite presence into the camp and is then executed, along with his entire household (7:24-26).

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<sup>1</sup>I have developed this symmetry of structure, and its implications in greater detail in "The Problem with Pagans," in *Reading Bibles, Writing Bodies: Identity and the Book*, Timothy K. Beal and David M. Gunn, eds. (London: Routledge) 153-163. My remarks in this section summarize points made in that essay.

The stories of Rahab and the Gibeonites demonstrate that Israel's communal boundaries are elastic and address an important question: Can Israel remain a coherent community if it incorporates outsiders? If so, on what basis can outsiders be incorporated? The text introduces these questions through the story of Rahab, the quintessential outsider, by employing a subtlety commensurate with the delicacy of the issue.<sup>2</sup> By allowing her family to survive, Israel breaks the explicit commands of Moses (cf. Deut 7:1-4):

Make no covenant with them and show them no mercy. Do not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons, for that would turn away your children from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you and he would destroy you quickly.

The impropriety of this act is hinted at as the spies negotiate with her, but is never articulated, and Rahab herself is depicted in a manner that suggests her resemblance to Israel.<sup>3</sup> Her story concludes with the statement that she "lives within Israel to the present day," although at a relatively safe location at the periphery of the community (6:23, 25).

The Gibeonites' story, on the other hand, confronts the reader directly with the incorporation of outsiders. The specter of a forbidden covenant is raised at the beginning of the episode, when the narrator divulges the Gibeonites' deceptive stratagem, and thereafter constitutes the focus of the episode. As with Rahab, the Gibeonites display traits otherwise associated with

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<sup>2</sup>Rahab personifies qualities that represent the binary opposites of Israel in terms of ethnicity (Canaanite), gender (female) and theology. ("To prostitute oneself" is a common idiom for following "other gods" rather than YHWH [Exod 34:14-16; Deut 31:16-18; Judg 2:17]).

<sup>3</sup>Rahab is resourceful and aggressive in her quest to gain life in the land. And words of praise to YHWH issue from *her* lips, rather than from those of the Israelites in the story. Through artful allusions to the story of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:1-29), the narrator intimates that she is a character worthy of deliverance. These aspects of the story are elaborated in detail in L. Daniel Hawk, "Strange Houseguests: Rahab, Lot, and the Dynamics of Deliverance," in *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible*, Danna Nolan Fewell, ed., LCBI (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1992) 89-97.

Israel.<sup>4</sup> And they also exhibit a knowledge of and response to the Mosaic *torah*, acclaim YHWH's mighty deeds, and display qualities prized by Israel.<sup>5</sup> Their story also ends with a note of their continuing presence within Israel, although they are not assigned to the periphery but to altar, the very center of the community's life (Josh 9:23, 27). Along with the story of Rahab, the Gibeonite episode collapses perceived distinctions between Israel and the peoples of the land and establishes a precedent for the extension of Israel's boundaries to include members of other ethnic groups.<sup>6</sup>

The stories of Achan and the battle at Ai address the opposite issue: how to deal with undetected difference within the Israelite community—what to do if one of *us* becomes one of *them*. The plunder stolen by Achan carries radically “not-Israel” marks, both in the social and the theological sense. Taken from Jericho, it has been designated with the same *herem*, or “off-limits,” status attributed to the inhabitants of Canaan (Josh 6:17-18; Deut 7:1-4). In addition, it has been declared “holy” and has been dedicated to the “treasury of YHWH” (Josh 6:19). The story opens by demonstrating that Achan has transformed the entire community by bringing what is “not-Israel” into the camp. The campaign begins with a report that YHWH's anger burns against Israel, a divine response associated with Israel's turn to other peoples and their gods (cf. Deut 6:15; 7:4; 11:17; 13:17 [18]; 29:20-28 [19-27]; 31:17; cf. Josh 23:16). Second, the nation loses the “all-Israel” character that leads elsewhere to victory. Only

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<sup>4</sup>Like Israel, and unlike the other peoples of the land, the Gibeonites have no king, and the text gives the impression that their decisions are communal in nature, making no distinction between the Gibeonites as a whole and the delegation that speaks to Joshua and the Israelite leaders (9:3-13).

<sup>5</sup>The Gibeonites demonstrate initiative and ingenuity. Their ruse, in which they represent themselves as travelers from a distant land, is concocted in accordance with the Deuteronomic rules for warfare, which allow Israel to accept the surrender of peoples outside the land but not those within (Deut 20:1-20). They also acclaim YHWH's mighty deeds (9:9b-10), while the Israelites in the story do not even bother to consult YHWH (v. 14).

<sup>6</sup>Even though covenants with Canaanites are explicitly forbidden by Moses, the narrator pointedly never refers to the relevant Deuteronomic texts, nor does YHWH respond with the anger which Moses warns will result from such acts. For a fuller discussion of this point, see Lyle Eslinger, *Into the Hands of the Living God*, JSOTSup 84 (Sheffield: Almond/Sheffield University, 1989), 23-54.



a fraction of the nation assaults Ai, and these troops are routed with the "melting hearts" that have previously characterized the Canaanites (Josh 7:2-5; cf. 2:11; 5:1). Israel therefore suffers precisely those consequences that Moses warned would result from the transgression of social and theological boundaries. By intimating that Israel's defeat is a consequence of one person's transgression, the narrator also points to the deeper implications of the theft. Achan has broken Israel's distinctive integrity by introducing a strange element into the camp *and hiding its presence from the rest of the group*.

The narrative accentuates the symbolic implications of Achan's transgression in a number of ways. Lexical and thematic allusions to Deuteronomy 13:1-18 link Achan with the apostates who entice Israel to the worship of other gods.<sup>7</sup> YHWH characterizes the crime as a corporate transgression of the covenant and declares that, as a result, Israel has become *herem*, just like the peoples they are to destroy (7:12). Achan himself embodies the paradox of the insider-turned-outsider. The text stresses his ethnic purity by introducing him with an extensive pedigree: "Achan son of Carmi son of Zabdi son of Zerah of the tribe of Judah" (7:1). His name, however, is nonsensical and derives from no known Hebrew root. On the other hand, it is mysteriously suggestive. A transposition the first two radicals of his name (אכח) yields the root of the name Canaan. Does Achan (אכח) represent the hidden presence of Canaan (כנען)?<sup>8</sup> The entire tale, with its concentration on discovering identity, thus constitutes a paradigm for confronting and eliminating heterogeneous elements from the community. Following Deuteronomy's directions for dealing with seducing apostates (13:6-18), the

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<sup>7</sup>Deuteronomy calls for death by stoning for those who seduce Israel to follow other gods. In case of cities which apostatize, a careful investigation is called for. If the matter is confirmed, the whole town is to be destroyed and burned, with its citizens, cattle, and materials. The same procedure is followed to identify and execute Achan and his family.

<sup>8</sup>1 Chron 2:7 lists his name as "Achar (אכח) the troubler (עורר) of Israel." This form of the name coheres with Joshua's pronouncement ("Why have you troubled Israel?" Josh 7:24) and explains the etiological thrust of the story with reference to the valley of Achor (Josh 7:26). It may therefore represent the more original rendering of the name. Some have argued that the difference in terms is the result of a scribal error which mistook resh for final nun. This seems improbable, however, since the scribe would have had to make this mistake repeatedly and consistently while copying the text, not only throughout Josh 7 but also in Josh 22:20.

nation separates itself from this insider-gone-bad and destroys all traces of the “not-Israel” presence he has injected into the community. Achan, his family and livestock are killed and burned along with their possessions.

With communal integrity thus restored, the focus turns outward in the ensuing battle at Ai, where Israel reverses the tables on Canaan. Now Israel hides and deceives, laying an ambush which entices the people of Ai to leave the safety of their communal boundaries (8:1-29). Having been enticed by Israel’s deceit, the Canaanites rush out of the city into the open and are quickly destroyed. By hiding from Canaan, in a sense turning its own hidden seductiveness against it, Israel demonstrates its mastery and supremacy over the threat of Canaanite difference.

The campaign at Ai thus reverses many of the elements of the stories set at Jericho and Gibeon. In the latter stories, communal boundaries are extended to incorporate others who resemble Israel. At Ai the community borders are confirmed by excluding an Israelite who resembles Canaan. Taken together, all the accounts argue both for the elasticity and maintenance of communal boundaries. But they also demonstrate that neither land, ethnicity, nor religious confession constitute the definitive mark of Israelite identity, the standard of exclusion and inclusion from the nation.

### The Allotment

The allotment of tribal territories follows the program developed in the conquest stories but gives primary focus to geographical boundaries rather than those of ethnicity and law. The process of apportionment takes place in three stages. First, the narrator reports the apportionment of land east of the Jordan to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half-Manasseh, pointedly referring to their territory as the land Moses gave (as opposed to the land YHWH gave [13:15, 24, 29; cf. 1:14; 22:7]). The text then moves to the lands apportioned to Judah and the Joseph tribes. The description of Judah’s territory consists of a boundary which is elaborated in striking detail (15:1-12) and a precise and systematic list of cities (15:20-62). By contrast, the descriptions of Ephraim and Manasseh’s territories are sparse, muddled, and fragmentary. And while the description of Judah’s territory begins with the inspiring story of Caleb, that of the Josephites’ concludes with a report of the tribes’ unwillingness to take cities within their inheritance.<sup>9</sup> Thus, while the territory of Judah seems to embody the ideal of

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<sup>9</sup>The accounts of both Ephraim and Manasseh conclude with reports that the tribes could not dispossess the indigenous inhabitants of the land. A similar note appends the report of Judah’s settlement (15:63). However, in this case, the note refers to the tribe’s failure to take Jerusalem, a city that lies *outside* its

a homogeneous territory swept clean of Canaanite elements, the territories of the Josephites take on a distinctively heterogeneous character.<sup>10</sup>

Inserted within the descriptions of these tribal lands are two stories which challenge Israel's system of geographical and social organization just as the stories of Rahab and the Gibeonites challenged communal boundaries. The concepts of possession and inheritance are closely linked to a patriarchy network which give divine sanction to claims to property and provide an organization scheme for tribes and clans. The stories of Achsah (15:16-19) and Zelophehad's daughters (17:3-6), however, relate situations in which women are given land. Following an earlier tactic, the issue is introduced in muted terms through the story of Achsah, who seeks a "field" and receives springs of water in the Negeb, safely within the patrimony of Caleb. The story of Zelophehad's daughters then presents the issue more directly. Here the text begins by suggesting an equivalency between the daughters and the Manassite clans, first by the listing of their names (corresponding to the listing of Manassite clans [17:2]) and then by referring to them as the "daughters of Manasseh" (v. 6), who receive "an inheritance (נחלה) among the brothers of

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assigned boundaries.

<sup>10</sup>The picture is punctuated, at the end, with an anecdote that reports the Josephites' desire to clear new land rather than to challenge Canaanite power in the region (17:14-18). The anecdote illustrates the Josephites' reluctance to fulfill the commands of Moses and links this reluctance with the survival of the land's inhabitants within their tribal allotments.

The story of Caleb stands in contrast to the Josephites' reluctance to engage the Canaanites. The stories thus work together to illustrate the connection (positively and negatively) between fulfillment of Moses' commands and success in taking the land. Caleb embodies the tribe of Judah. He aggressively seeks the strongholds of Canaan and prevails. Judah the tribe also succeeds in taking the whole of the territory allotted to it. On the other hand, the Josephites fear the Canaanite strongholds. The description of their territory mirrors their trepidation. They do not take the major cities and never completely drive out the indigenous inhabitants. For more on the intersection of the territorial descriptions and themes of obedience, see my discussion in *Every Promise Fulfilled: Contesting Plots in Joshua*, LCBI (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991) 98-114.



their father".<sup>11</sup> The possession of "inheritances" by women explicitly challenges the structures which equate ownership of land with the male members of the community and, more fundamentally, the patriarchal system which undergirds it. Whereas the stories of Rahab and the Gibeonites contest an exclusionary ethic which seeks to preserve stark ethnic boundaries, these stories of women and land challenge an ideology that gives only men a privileged place in the nation.<sup>12</sup>

The third round of allotments (concerning the remaining tribes [18:1-19:51]) parallels the second. This stage begins with a precise description of the boundaries and cities of Benjamin. However, the pattern gradually disintegrates as each successive tribal territory is recounted. The allotments of Simeon and Dan, which display a complete lack of territorial integrity, bracket other confused or incoherent descriptions. The report of Dan's possession breaks the tight connection between "inheritance" and "possession" altogether by reporting that the tribe exercised its own initiative and took possession of land that was other than its assigned inheritance (19:40-48).<sup>13</sup>

Through its juxtaposition of conflicting or incongruous materials, the description of tribal allotments continues to destabilize the territorial and social boundaries that configure Israel's identity. The reader may therefore be surprised by the narrator's concluding declaration that Israel took possession of the land YHWH had given (21:43-45). The remarks have puzzled many interpreters, since the whole tone of the preceding account has indicated the opposite; large tracts of land remain in Canaanite hands and Canaanites continue to live among Israelites. The summary's meaning, however, is to be found in its focus on YHWH's faithfulness in the light of Israel's diffidence. While the preceding description has focused on what Israel did, the summary emphasizes what YHWH did. Israel's resolve may not be complete, but nonetheless "not one of the good words YHWH made to Israel failed; all came to pass" (v. 45). In contrast to the uncertain state of Israel's affairs depicted in

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<sup>11</sup>The root נחל, which denotes legitimate claim to property, occurs four times in vv. 4-6. For a fuller discussion of נחל as claim see Norman C. Habel, *The Land Is Mine: Six Biblical Land Ideologies*, OBT (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Fortress, 1995) 33-35.

<sup>12</sup>In a sense, the story of Rahab introduces this concept as well. Like Achsah and the daughters of Zelophehad, she exemplifies the initiative required to take possession of the land.

<sup>13</sup>See *Every Promise Fulfilled*, 110-113.

the previous reports, the narrator's comments assert that YHWH is ultimately responsible for all that Israel has and is.

### **Working through Identity**

The concluding section of Joshua comprises a series of texts which bring the issue of Israelite identity into explicit focus. The story of a conflict between the tribes to the east and west of the Jordan (22:1-34) brings together defining questions of territory, obedience, and kinship and for a final time illustrates the uncertain character of each. Joshua's testamentary address (23:1-16) then picks up these themes and locates them within the matrix of Israel's choices, in preparation for a final scene where Israel is constituted by choices during a covenant ceremony at Shechem (24:1-28).

The confrontation at the Jordan (Josh 22:10-34) revisits the issue of community integrity. At issue is an altar which the eastern tribes have constructed in the boundary region of the Jordan. The altar threatens a dangerous plurality which erases community integrity and union with YHWH, for Deuteronomy stipulates that sacrifice may only be conducted at the "place where YHWH has chosen to place his name" (cf. Deut 12:10-14). The episode centers on conflicting perceptions of Israelite identity. The western tribes view the construction of the altar as catastrophic act of rebellion and sacrilege and equate it with the apostasy at Baal-Peor and with Achan's sin (vv. 17, 20). From their perspective, Israel is defined by geography. They refer to their side of the Jordan as "YHWH's land," insinuate that the land east of the Jordan is "unclean," and bid their kindred to join them.

The eastern tribes respond by articulating a sense of identity based on kinship ties, and they bring the question of national identity to the surface. First they deny the explicit charges leveled against them (rebellion, sacrilege) and then the implicit accusations underlying them (that they have built the altar "to turn Israel away from following YHWH" [vv. 22-23]).<sup>14</sup> They then explain that the altar has been constructed to ensure that the bonds that hold the nation together will remain intact well into the future. The altar, they imply, is meant to unify, not divide: "We did this out of concern that at a later time your children will say to our children, 'What have you to do with YHWH the God of Israel?'" (v. 24). The explanation reveals an understanding of national identity

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<sup>14</sup>The text prepares the reader to see other issues beneath the charges by introducing the episode with a scene in which Joshua endorses the easterners' obedience to YHWH (22:1-6). Joshua's emphatic commendation thus stands in striking contrast to the subsequent (and equally emphatic) condemnation of the delegation.

based on maintaining kinship bonds, even across geographical boundaries. The conflict, then, arises because the two groups perceive "Israel" in different terms. Israelites west of the Jordan equate their identity with the land they possess, while those in the east understand their identity in terms of kinship. The conflicting perceptions highlight the difficulty in sorting out questions of obedience to YHWH. Who is obedient to YHWH in this story? And how can obedience be determined amidst contrary motives and perspectives? The situation is resolved only through a tenuous explanation that the altar will not really be a place of sacrifice but a "model" and a memorial.

Joshua's farewell address (23:1-16) takes up the themes of land, obedience, and separation and subsumes them under imperatives that emphasize the importance of the choices Israel faces; that is, to cling to YHWH and remain YHWH's people or to follow the ways of the people of the land and their gods. Here as well Joshua sets Israelite integrity against Canaanite plurality. Joshua addresses "all Israel" (v. 2; cf. v. 14) and admonishes the assembled nation to observe carefully the whole of the book of the law (i.e. Deuteronomy; v. 6), to cling to YHWH (v. 8), and to love him (v. 11). If so, he promises, Israelite integrity will prevail over Canaanite plurality: "one of you sets one thousand fleeing" (v. 10). On the other hand, Joshua reminds the people that they must not "go among these nations which remain among you" (v. 7), and warns that contact with the Canaanites is tantamount to following after their gods (v. 7). Clinging to the many gods of Canaan will yield the opposite result: YHWH's anger will be kindled and they, like the people of the land, will disappear (vv. 12-13, 16). Joshua ends his address by turning the promise motif on its head and setting choices and consequences before Israel. Just as YHWH fulfilled all the good he promised, so will he fulfill all the bad if Israel ever transgresses the covenant (vv. 14-16).

The final scene of the book (Josh 24:1-28) then takes up the theme of choosing and presents it as the foundation of Israel's national identity. At Shechem, Joshua brings the nation to a point of decision. The episode opens with a retelling of Israel's history which concentrates on what YHWH has done to bring the nation into being. YHWH, through Joshua, recasts Israel's story in first person, making the nation the object, rather than the subject, of its own story. By emphasizing divine initiative at each point of Israel's life as a nation, the retrospective demonstrates that YHWH's commitment to Israel sets the nation apart from all others. As a consequence, Joshua calls on Israel either to put away the other gods in its midst and serve YHWH alone or to serve the many gods of Mesopotamia, Egypt and Canaan (vv. 14-15). In response, the nation declares its choice repeatedly and emphatically for YHWH, and Joshua confirms the decision by making a covenant and erecting memorial stones (vv. 25-27). The book, therefore, ends with a climactic scene that recounts that YHWH has



chosen Israel and that Israel in turn has chosen YHWH.

As the book draws to a close, Canaanites remain in the land and peoples of the land live among the people of God. Israel's ethnic homogeneity, its obedience to the commands of Moses, and even its connection to the land have proven equivocal marks of national identity. Rather than constituting ends in themselves, the final scene of Joshua leads the reader to acknowledge that all find their meaning against the backdrop of those decisions which form the basis for Israel's unique existence as a people. In this way, the book of Joshua argues against associating Israel's distinctive identity with racial, religious, or territorial programs. Instead it affirms that Israel exists because YHWH created it, accompanies it, and accomplishes the divine will through it. Ultimately, God's people are not defined by possession of a particular land, the correct and uniform performance of laws and commands, or by a sense of ethnic purity. Instead, Israel is a nation both created by YHWH and established by the decisions of its members.



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David A. deSilva\*

### *Introduction*

The pastoral counselor, as I understand the vocation, differs from the secular analyst in that he or she draws upon the resources of Christian spirituality, and, in particular, the resources of Scripture as a means of facilitating the healing and wholeness of the client. It is out of this conviction that a seminary will require the pastoral counselor, like the pastor-in-training, to take courses in Hermeneutics, Old Testament Introduction, and New Testament Introduction, and to be exposed, at least in a preliminary way, to the art of exegesis. The close, careful investigation of Scripture proves to be most fruitful to the counselor's task, if he or she pursues it with rigor, applying the tools she or he learns in those foundational courses and continuing to seek out books that open up Scripture from those angles. On the one hand, the counselor can then identify and deconstruct unhealthful applications of Scripture in the counsellee's situation or background — misreadings that conduce to psychic disease rather than wholeness. On the other hand, she or he is less likely to use Scripture in a superficial and inauthentic manner. Instead, the counselor who "does his or her homework," as it were, in Biblical study as well as the study of psychological and relational dysfunctions and their treatment will be able skillfully to identify metaphors and images from the Scriptures that will be healthful for clients and redemptive for their situations. The purpose of this article is to provide some indication of the fruitfulness of deep exegetical study of one particular text, 1 Peter, for the counselor's task, and thus to motivate the counselor to integrate ever more completely the study of Scripture with the study of souls.

### *Setting of 1 Peter*

The Greco-Roman world was filled with temples, shrines, and altars to various divinities. Piety was a primary component of the virtue of "justice," and people sought to give the gods their due in order to sustain divine favor toward their family, city and empire. Religion was not compartmentalized in this world, but entered into political meetings, convocations of trade guilds, private dinner parties, public festivals, and family meals. It sheltered all aspects of life like a great canopy. Participation in these religious rituals was a sign of

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solidarity with one's fellows, a token of one's commitment to do one's part for the well-being of the group and to sustain the domestic and public order, the stability of which was regarded as a necessary good for a tranquil and well-ordered life together. Those who did not even believe in the gods nevertheless worshiped them and stood by their fellow-citizens or family members in domestic and public rites, recognizing the social importance of these observances.

Conversion to Christianity, like conversion to its parent religion, Judaism, meant abandoning participation in the worship of all gods other than the One God of whom no image could be fashioned. Avoiding all idolatrous cult was not merely a religious choice, but had profound reverberations in one's domestic and social life. Shunning the worship of all gods save the One tended to isolate the Christians from their former networks of patrons, friends and associates, as well as from non-Christian members of their household (unless, of course, the male head of the household, the *paterfamilias*, was himself a Christian, since the household was expected to worship of the gods of the *paterfamilias*). Absence at public occasions of worship and festivities would also come to be noticed.

Christianity would be seen from outside as an infectious superstition that turned solid citizens of the Roman world and reliable friends and members of one's own household into an unreliable and rebellious lot. Separation from idols meant separation from idolaters on many occasions, hence the Christians would begin to look like a faction, a divisive element within society. Separation from idols often meant refusing to worship the gods of the head of the household, hence the Christian wife or slave would appear to rebel against the domestic order, perhaps even to seek to subvert it. Separation from idols also meant refusal of participation in the cult of the emperor, which was a prominent expression of loyalty and gratitude to the fount of aid in time of need — hence a blot on the city should the emperor's local representatives take notice. Like its parent religion, Christianity called its adherents to a strict moral code. While the high-minded philosophers Epictetus and Musonius Rufus might have adhered to similar standards, many in the Greco-Roman world would at least have regarded some license in drinking and the occasional sexual indiscretion as welcome diversions. Avoiding the activities and company of those with whom the believers used to carouse would be received as implicit censure and reinforced the widening rift between converts and their former associates.

The Christians living in the five provinces addressed by 1 Peter — the Roman provinces of Asia, Bithynia, Pontus, Galatia, and Cappadocia, which occupy most of what is now called Turkey — had so “distinguished” themselves in the eyes of their non-Christian neighbors. These neighbors were

indeed “surprised” that the Christians “no longer join them in the same excesses of dissipation,” as the author colorfully describes Gentile life, particularly in “lawless idolatry” (1 Pet 4:3-4). The result is that the non-Christians have been applying the basic kinds of pressure that groups tend always to apply on deviants to get them to conform to the norms of the larger group. They have subjected the Christians to slander, insult, and, where possible, physical abuse (2:12, 15; 3:9, 16; 4:14-16; 5:9) in an attempt to “rehabilitate” their neighbors, that is, to bring them back to their old way of life and cause them to stop challenging that way of life by their withdrawal from it. It is particularly the converted slaves who appear to have been subject to beatings for their disobedience, that is, their refusal to participate in domestic rituals involving idolatrous rites (2:18-21), though dark alleys also provide opportunities for free persons also to experience physical abuse at the hands of their disapproving neighbors.

1 Peter is written quite specifically to assist the Christians come to terms with, and respond nobly to, this situation. First, the author seeks to insulate the Christians against viewing these experiences as negative reflections on their own honor and their commitment to follow Jesus: He is concerned to defuse the power that such censure and abuse might have to make the believers withdraw back into the life they chose to leave behind at their conversion. Second, the author directs the hearers to orient themselves toward each other in ways that will build up the bonds within the Christian community. Mutual love, encouragement, and help is to offset the erosion from outside and to enable each individual's perseverance in a way of life they have adopted as true and life-giving. Third, the author leads his addressees to make a response to their detractors that is in keeping with the way of life they have learned from Jesus, namely to bless those who curse and do good to those who harm. By studiously avoiding all actions that would confirm their neighbors' suspicions that Christianity leads one to criminal or subversive activity, the author hopes that the unbelievers will themselves come to realize the error of opposing a noble way of life.

### *1. Parting with a futile inheritance*

The author develops a dominant image for the significance of the pilgrimage the Christians have made as they moved away from deep involvement in the idolatry of the Greco-Roman world, namely the image of a new birth. The Christians had previously been in bondage on account of the “futile ways inherited from [their] ancestors” (1:18). The heritage of this natural birth — the birth effected through “perishable seed” (1:23) — meant, according to the author, a sentence to an inauthentic life. The addressees had already spent many years worshiping gods that were no gods, engaging in

social relations that merely counterfeited intimacy and fellowship and were not conducive to the formation of a centered, whole person: "You have already spent enough time in doing what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry" (4:3).

The message about Jesus changed their perception about this way of life, opening them up to an alternative that they recognized as more authentic, full of promise for deep human relationships built upon a stronger foundation of truth and mutual commitment. The author calls this conversion "a new birth into a living hope ... and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading" (1:3-4). The believers have been granted the privilege of a renewed beginning, and so are called "like newborn babies" to "desire the pure spiritual milk" rather than sour that milk by allowing "malice, guile, insincerity, envy, and slander" to intrude upon their relationships with each other (2:1). "Like obedient children," upon whom the patterns of the parents are imprinted, the believers are to imitate their new Father (1:14-16), who sired them with the "imperishable seed" of the Word of the gospel (1:23-25). They are called to grow into holiness, rather than to continue in those patterns learned from their families of origin and the unbelieving society into which they were socialized (1:14, 18). A certain obligation attaches to persevering in this new birth, new identity, and new patterning, since the transition from their pre-Christian lives to their birth into God's household was effected only at great cost, namely the self-surrender of Jesus (1:18-21; 2:24-25; 3:18).

This image certainly advanced the author's primary goal for the addressees, namely to insulate them from the social pressures they were experiencing. The image vividly reminded the hearers of the distance that existed now between them and the way of life they had chosen to leave behind in search of one that led them to a deeper communion with God and with each other. It reminded them, as well, of the undesirability of allowing those who still labored in slavery to that old way of life to pull those who had been liberated back into bondage. Finally, the image calls the hearers to persevere in living out that life for which they had been ransomed, growing into that person that their new birth enabled them to become.

The author's image remains a powerful resource for assisting Christians to reflect upon the implications of discipleship, and it is a particularly potent resource for those on a counseling journey in particular. A great deal of attention is given in pastoral counseling to discerning the ways in which a person continues to be bound by defense mechanisms and dysfunctional patterns of behavior written deep into that person's relational instincts by years of training in "futile ways inherited from one's ancestors." The metaphor proclaims the real possibility of a decisive break with, and



exodus from, that heritage, offering hope to those discouraged by the awesomeness of the journey they are attempting to make. As elements of that baggage are uncovered, the model also identifies those values, relational premises, and almost automatic reactions as elements of the “me” that the counselee is free no longer to be, as excluded from the “me” that the counselee is free to become.

This dissociative aspect of the metaphor of “new birth, new hope, new inheritance” is equally vital for all seeking to grow in discipleship. We are continually confronted in our reading of Scripture, our life of prayer, and in our hearing of the proclaimed word with the incompatibility of particular aspects of the way of life learned in our “primary socialization” (whether in our homes of origin, our formal education, or our observation and experience of “the way of the world”) and the way of life that reflects the holiness of God.

Within 1 Peter, several premises that remain fundamental to human relations are overturned. The first of these concerns the “get even” mentality, declaring the desire to return harm for harm (or at least to withhold good from those who have done us harm) to be part of this futile inheritance, which is corrected by the example of Jesus: “‘He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.’ When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly” (2:22-23). In keeping with Jesus’ teaching about what it meant to live as “children of the Father who is in heaven” (see Mt 5:44-48), the author of 1 Peter instructs the believers born into God’s family not to “repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called — that you might inherit a blessing” (3:9).

A second example can be found in the author’s instructions to women (specifically to wives, but this one point can be broadened): “Do not adorn yourselves outwardly by braiding your hair, and by wearing gold ornaments or fine clothing; rather, let your adornment be the inner self with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in God’s sight” (3:3-4). As with so many portions of the New Testament, these verses have been applied in literalistic, legalistic, restrictive ways. Taken rightly, however, the author offers a word of liberation from bondage to seeking approval and self-esteem based on one’s physical appeal (as well as the corollary, namely the tendency of men to measure women in this way). The author seeks to move the hearers toward more authentic interaction with and valuing of one another, receiving and giving affirmation based on the qualities of the soul rather than the appeal of the body (the latter being inevitably tied to sexual motivations, the former to harmony and partnership of the inner persons).

The image of leaving behind the values and relational patterns learned apart from God in favor of growing into the new person birth into God’s family

makes a possibility can thus continually hold before believers the challenge of “unlearning” and abandoning those premises and patterns that hinder the formation of Christ in us. The result of leaving behind a way of life that alienates one from God and from authentic and full relationships with other people means relief from the internal battle, from “the desires of the flesh that wage war against the soul” (2:11). The author shares with Paul the basic dualistic understanding of the human person (see Gal 5:16-25): as one indulges the passions of the flesh one harms one’s own soul. This understanding does not seek to destroy or suppress physical pleasure, but all those forces that contribute to inauthentic or hurtful or dysfunctional relationships, as the list of “passions” in Gal 5:19-21 makes clear.

The call to holiness (1:14-16) is a call to integrity, to commit wholly<sup>1</sup> to *one* set of values and way of life rather than limping between several mutually antagonistic ways of life. The author’s direction to set all one’s hope on the favor that comes with the establishing of God’s kingdom serves to sustain this commitment and to sustain a single-hearted focus rather than allowing divergent hopes and ambitions to rob us of the integrity of living wholly in God’s light and in response to God’s call. The “ransom” provided by Jesus’ giving of himself does not merely effect freedom “from” a destructive way of life but also freedom “for” a new life. Obedience to God’s leading — discipline with regard to the temptations to return to the well-known ways learned from childhood — is essential for finding integrity and wholeness in the new person that Jesus enables the believer to become. With healing comes a new purpose, with freedom from dysfunctional and restrictive patterns and impulses comes a new direction for life (1:2; 2:9; 2:24; 3:10-12).

## 2. 1 Peter and Suffering

Perhaps no New Testament book is as dedicated to helping believers come to terms with, and respond to, suffering as 1 Peter. We must be very

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<sup>1</sup>The homophony of “wholeness” and “holiness” is more than a serendipitous pun. Defilement and uncleanness in the Jewish purity codes were often directly related to lack of wholeness (= holiness) of the skin, the bodily orifices, and other representations of boundaries. On this topic, see further Mary Douglas, “Atonement in Leviticus,” *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 1 (1993/94) 109-130.; J. H. Neyrey, “Body Language in 1 Corinthians: The Use of Anthropological Models for Understanding Paul and His Opponents,” *Semeia* 35 (1986) 129-170. Readers may also wish to consult chapter 4 of D. A. deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000).

clear here about the precise *kind* of suffering about which the author speaks, or else we will come to misapply this resource. The author addresses people who have encountered resistance, insult, censure, and even physical abuse because of their commitment to respond to Christ and to do what God commands. It is their obedience to the commandment to avoid worship of other gods that, in the main, has led to the pressures being brought to bear on them in the household (in the case of wives and slaves) and in the street. The author is *not* speaking about suffering in general, encompassing all disease, chronic illness, domestic abuse, or political oppression in his statements about suffering.

I must especially stress that domestic violence and abusive marriages are not “sanctioned” in some way by this text. The proximity of instructions to wives in 3:1-6 and discussions of suffering abuse (2:18-25; 3:13-17) has led to such problematic applications, with the result that some pastors or other Christian friends will advise a spouse to remain in an abusive relationship because this is God’s will (3:17; 4:19). Physical abuse between spouses, however, was not sanctioned even by Greco-Roman statutes, and so persevering in an abusive relationship cannot have been an aspect of the witness to the unbelieving spouse encouraged in 3:1-6. Rather, the author is speaking very specifically about suffering endured for “doing what is right” (2:20; 3:14), for “doing good” (3:17), “for the name of Christ” (4:14), and for “bearing the name” of “a Christian” (4:16). Suffering “in line with God’s will” (4:19) is quite explicitly limited by this author to suffering encountered because obedience to Jesus’ call, teaching, and example has brought one to that point of conflict with those who resist God’s vision for human relationships.

This is the condition of a considerable portion of the global family of God. I have found a general reluctance among Christians in the West to learn about and speak of the persecution encountered by sisters and brothers abroad, although I would not presume to diagnose the causes for this silence. Nevertheless, a part of the Body of Christ is subjected still to censure, discrimination, disprivilege, and even imprisonment and death on account of its confession of faith. It is also the lot of many who stand up for God’s vision of a just society, who take the lead against systems that guard the privilege of one group at the expense of the well-being of another group. One need only remember the resistance to, and suffering endured by, those who were “eager to do what was good” in recent history — Martin Luther King, Jr. and pastors and laity who sought to advance Civil Rights, Nelson Mandela and Allan Boesak, jailed for their witness in South Africa, and the confessors and martyrs of the Russian churches whose stories have become known since the dissolution of the Soviet Union are but a few examples. If “suffering for doing what is right” or for the sake of the name of Christ seem remote, it may be a sign that we have retreated far from those areas where the message of God



would have us challenge the structures and practices by which our own land sustains its status quo.

1 Peter speaks to all who encounter resistance and suffering because they are going where God leads them, speaking up for God's truth, searching for a new model for human relationships built on a stronger foundation than individual or systemic defense mechanisms. The author's desire is that the believer not be defeated or intimidated by such resistance (3:14), but rather be faithful to God's leading whatever the cost. He seeks to embolden believers to heed God's leading wherever that would take them: if it takes them into places where they will encounter the resistance of family, friends, or those who have power over life and freedom itself, it still has not taken them out of God's favor nor deprived them of the honor in which God holds them (4:14-16). At many points in this letter, the author specifically speaks of the honor — the dignity — that these marginalized believers have by virtue of their place in God's family (2:4-5, 9-10; 4:14-16). He also encourages them in the midst of their trials that honor will be the outcome of their perseverance (1:7; 2:6-8;<sup>2</sup> 5:6). These passages are resources for the encouragement of all who must persevere in the face of hostility if they are to arrive at the growth that God desires for them.

As 1 Peter gives us a window into the experiences of rejection and "rehabilitation" suffered by Christians at the hands of their non-Christian neighbors, it also connects with the experiences of many who, whether deepening in their discipleship or pursuing the healing of a counseling journey, encounter resistance from their natural families or circles of associates. When one member of a co-dependent team reaches for a more authentic existence, the other member is likely to respond negatively, to exert whatever pressure possible to maintain the relational patterns that, though mutually harmful, are controllable, known, and safe. When one member of a family ceases to play the

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<sup>2</sup>1 Pet 2:6-8 is one place where close attention to the Greek text is more helpful than most available English translations. These latter rather consistently mistranslate 2:7 as "to you then who believe, he is precious" (NRSV; see also the NASV, JB, RSV, and NIV), as if the author were still speaking about the believers' perception of Jesus, the cornerstone. The Greek has not the adjective "precious" (*timios*), however, but the related noun, "honor" (*timē*): "Honor, then, is for you who believe." The author is developing a projection of the consequences of trusting Jesus introduced in the Psalm text quoted in 2:6, which promises that "whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." The Christians will come to honor for their commitment, while their detractors will come to shame (they will "stumble" and "fall").

games endemic to a dysfunctional family, the other members are likely to endeavor to pressure that individual to resume the role assigned him or her. Why? One member of the system may be ready to call those games into question, to set them aside, and discover a new and more authentic way of relating, but the others may not respond kindly to having those games, forged and perfected through years of practice and maintained by the weight of strong defense mechanisms, critically examined and threatened. This can be observed on the societal level as well: when beloved systems or values, however evil and hurtful to human relationships, are called into question rather than sustained through quiet participation, those who depend on those systems or values respond violently. These dynamics were very much on the surface as apartheid in South Africa or segregation in America were challenged from within; they were equally on the surface as Roman imperial ideology was challenged by Christian prophets in the late-first/early-second centuries.

The author's words to people facing this kind of pressure from those who embraced the life they left behind may still prove helpful when counseling or encouraging fellow-believers facing similar pressures today. First, he reminds them of the undesirability of returning to that way of life (1:18; 4:1-5). There were strong reasons for leaving it in favor of a new one, and those reasons urge perseverance in the way to life. Though resuming society's or one's family's dysfunctional games and values would bring relief from tension on some fronts, it would also bring the greater tension of having exchanged the hope of freedom for a return to slavery. Second, he instructs them to show their detractors that the way of life they have found is a good one, one productive of what is noble, kind, and beneficent. The author trusts that the quiet display of virtue and authenticity has its own power of persuasion (2:12, 15; 3:1-2). Third, he urges them to be directed by God and by the example of Christ in all their dealings with other people. The laws of retaliation, of acting toward others as they act, inflict their own slavery upon the human soul.

The author is concerned that believers respond to those who have grieved them in such a way as reflects God's kindness rather than the hostile society's malice. Not returning ill for ill, but extending blessing remains the hallmark of Christian response. The Christian response to hostility is not to accept that the hostile ones have become a "them" divided from some "us." We are not free to hate those who hate us, nor to curse those who injure us. The task of pastoral counseling is not completed until the patient so experiences God's love that he or she can see that love extending to the other members of a dysfunctional, hurtful household (even if he or she will not be the one to take that love there). The persecuted one who learns to hate the persecutor has lost the best part of his or her faith, namely the love that is more valuable than martyrdom (to borrow from 1 Cor 13:3).

### 3. *The Church as Household of God*

In light of the numerous and variegated struggles encountered by individuals and groups as they follow the leading of God's Spirit — whether that leading invites them on journeys toward inner healing and the resistance one can encounter on such journeys, or compels them to take a stand against prevailing social norms, marking them as targets for those who have much invested in the status quo — it is not surprising to find most New Testament authors emphasizing the importance of the community of faith as a resource for the individual believer.

1 Peter opens by giving voice to, and legitimating, that sense of not belonging yet yearning for belonging. He calls the hearers "exiles of the Diaspora" (1:1), applying to these (mostly) Gentile Christians titles taken from Israel's experience of being removed from their homeland and being scattered amongst the Gentile nations. As he continues, he gives instructions for their conduct "during the time of your exile" (1:17) and acknowledges their lack of place "as aliens and exiles" (2:11). It has been suggested that the terms "resident alien" and "sojourner" speak of the legal, non-citizen status of the Christians in Asia Minor: lacking a real place in their cities, these people were drawn to the Christian movement as a place where they could "belong." Others have taken issue with this reading, viewing the terms as more metaphorical, speaking of their lack of citizenship on earth because they now are citizens of heaven.<sup>3</sup> The former position suffers from the fact that there is no way to prove that the author uses these terms in a legal, non-figurative sense (especially when other early Christian writers do employ the language metaphorically), but the latter position also suffers from not reckoning with the difficult social and economic circumstances that many early Christians faced.

I would suggest that, prior to their conversion, the addressees were very much "at home" with their neighbors and in their cities. They have, however, suffered a serious loss of place and loss of any sense of belonging as a result of their conversion, their withdrawal from so much of the way of life that formerly connected them with their neighbors (4:3-4). They have become outcasts in their own city. 1 Peter stresses, however, that they have also at the same time "come home." They have returned to their home in God's love ("you were wandering like sheep, but you have returned to the Shepherd and

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<sup>3</sup>J. H. Elliott (*A Home for the Homeless: A Sociological Exegesis of 1 Peter, Its Situation, and Strategy* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981]) pioneered the former hypothesis; Troy Martin (*Metaphor and Composition in 1 Peter* [SBLDS 131; Atlanta: Scholars, Press, 1992]) has more recently criticized it in favor of a metaphorical interpretation.



Guardian of your souls," 2:25; 3:18) and in the love of the community of sisters and brothers in Christ (1:22; 3:8; 4:8-10). The community of Christians must function as a place of belonging during the time of exile — an exile that ends only with this mortal life. Each member is brought, as it were, to a construction site where God is fitting them together into a "spiritual house" (2:4-5), an honored household serving the One God as priests.

The ethos of the local church can be much informed and formed by some words from Philo of Alexandria, perhaps the most famous first-century Jewish philosopher. Articulating the obligation laid upon Jews to welcome converts from the Gentiles, he writes:

Having given equal rank and honour to all those who come over, and having granted to them the same favours that were bestowed on those born Jews, Moses recommends those who are ennobled by truth not only to treat the converts with respect, but even with special friendship and excessive benevolence.... Those people who have left their country, and their friends, and their relations for the sake of virtue and holiness, ought not to be left destitute of other cities, and houses, and friends, but there ought to be places of refuge always ready for those who come over to religion (*The Special Laws* 1.52).

Philo recognized that the Jewish community needed to compensate the loss suffered by Gentiles leaving behind all the associations built around idolatry with their own acceptance, support, love, and friendship. Jesus no doubt had a similar vision in mind when he assured those who had left family and house for his sake that they would find a much larger family and many houses open to them in the movement they were starting (Mark 10:28-30). Individual perseverance would depend in large measure upon the acceptance and attachments each found within this new family.

Realizing the importance of building up this network of support, the author of 1 Peter also urges the local congregations he addresses to work toward being the "household of God" one to another: "now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart" (1:22). The word translated "mutual love" in the NRSV actually connotes "the love of siblings toward one another" (*philadelphia*). The author taps into the ethics of kinship to fill out his vision for life as a church. The love of siblings expressed itself in considering property to be held in common for the good of all, in cooperating rather than competing in endeavors, and in preserving unity and harmony within the group. Siblings, ideally, operated with complete honesty and trust toward one another. Several of the author's exhortations capture aspects of this

ethic quite explicitly:

Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander (2:1).

Have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind (3:8).

Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies (4:8-11).

The early Christian leaders sought to form this ethos within the church empire-wide, which had become a single family related in fact by blood, but now the blood of Jesus.

In countries where converts to Christianity face the same loss of family and other support networks on account of their confession, the author's words continue to be vital instructions for the survival of personal faith. Western churches, however, also need ever to strive at becoming well-functioning, supportive, caring families both to enable individuals' perseverance and growth in discipleship and to enable the healing of those whose natural kinship groups are the source of psychological or physical injury. Congregations can become the most important partners to the pastoral counselor in the healing of the emotionally and psychologically wounded, as the latter find in a church not merely "nice people" but people willing to take on the roles of sisters and brothers, providing friendship, listening ears, open homes.

Hospitality was essential to the success of the early church since teachers and messengers of the churches relied on willing believers to open their homes to them, but hospitality was also the visible sign that the believer had joined a global family. Wherever he or she went, he or she would not be without the ties of mutual affection and help that came from devotion to the One Lord. The reality of the family of God continues to come to expression when believers open their homes to a wife who needs to distance herself from an abusive husband, to Christians from abroad sojourning here (whether as students or as refugees), to the youth of the church as a place for mentoring and fellowship, and the like. "Show hospitality without grumbling" (4:9): take the family of God into your natural family domicile.

Churches are filled with gifted people. Some have an abundance of money and goods to share; others have compassionate hearts for listening and visiting; others have the gift of being spiritually centered people able to lead

others to that same centeredness. Whatever the gifts, the author avers that God has planted them in each of us for the building up of one another. His directions in 4:8-11 especially lead us to continue to ask ourselves and our churches what these gifts are and how they can be used for God's family locally and globally. The most important vehicle for God's healing, deliverance, and transformation is the local congregation, and 1 Peter invites each congregation to set aside every distraction and focus completely on sustaining one another — the habitual church member, the counsellor who comes for the first time at the suggestion of a pastoral counselor, and the family in Indonesia that has had its house burned to the ground in an anti-Christian terrorist act — on the journey to the imperishable inheritance that God would bestow on each of us. Pastoral counselors, pastors or missionaries from abroad, and local congregations and their pastors would do well to dialog with one another concerning how a local congregation can best serve as an agent of healing and support for the whole family of God.

#### 4. *The Natural (Christian) Household*

1 Peter, like Ephesians and Colossians, includes codes for conduct within the household. Unlike Ephesians and Colossians, which give reciprocal instructions to all three sets of relationships in the typical household (master and slaves, husbands and wives, parents and children), 1 Peter only addresses slaves, wives, and, most briefly, husbands. Since it is often the case that more fundamentalist groups will teach that these rules are still binding upon wives and husbands, it would be fitting to consider their significance and purpose so as to forestall (or remedy) unhealthful applications of these passages.

The author's instructions to women bear a marked resemblance to the picture of the ideal wife in the writings of Greek and Latin ethicists, as well as to Hellenistic Jewish authors.<sup>4</sup> Submission to the husband's authority, modesty, and quietness were the major components of this portrait. This submission did not include, however, acceptance of domestic violence, which was actionable then as now as a category of assault. Nor was submissiveness meant to limit or downplay the contributions of the wife in a household. Xenophon, for example, regarded men and women as differently and complementarily gifted for the effective management of a household and rearing of children, each contributing essential strengths not possessed by the other. Neither did

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<sup>4</sup>For a more thorough introduction to this topic, please see "Management of, and Behavior within, the Household" in chapter 3 of D. A. deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000).



submissiveness mean doing everything the husband said: the believing wife was certainly obliged to disobey an unbelieving husband's urging to return to the worship of his gods. The wife is called by the author to "do what is good" and not to yield to intimidation (3:6).

We must also reckon with the agenda behind the author's instructions. It was critical for him that unbelievers should understand that Christians did not seek to subvert the domestic and social order, one of the primary suspicions cast upon them. Their refusal of certain obligations (mostly those that included some idolatrous component) did not mean that they sought to bring unrest to homes and cities everywhere. Seeking to appear not to subvert these domestic norms is a very different goal from seeking indefinitely to perpetuate them. Those who read such passages as 3:1-6 as a template for husband-wife relationships as God meant them to be enacted through all time fail to take into account the author's very specific and culture-bound purposes in giving these instructions. Positively, the author wants unbelievers to see that responding to this Jesus resulted in the formation of many of the virtues prized by the dominant culture as well. This would, he hoped, make their neighbors revise their opinion of the Christian group and perhaps grow to accept it, if not join it.

The most important safeguards against applying the instructions to wives in a manner that acts to suppress a wife's growth, harm her self-esteem, or undervalue her contributions to home, church, and world, are the instructions to husbands. Where these are taken seriously, it is less likely that the instructions to wives will be applied in ways that appeal to the carnal mind — that mind shaped in us not by God but by the "futile ways inherited from our ancestors." I cannot help but recall here the ugliness of a man who rejoiced to share with me how submissive his wife was, how women were in their "proper place" in their church (i.e., veiled and in the back), and so forth. Such emphasis on domestic hierarchies and the reinforcement of the female's second-class status in the spatial arrangements of the church are far from the author's vision of a Christian marriage.

The English translations tend to skew the Greek text once again (as at 2:7). Consider, for example, the NRSV of 3:7: "Husbands, in the same way, show consideration for your wives in your life together, paying honor to the woman as the weaker sex, since they too are also heirs of the gracious gift of life — so that nothing may hinder your prayers." This translation obscures the motive clauses given by the author for each action, namely "showing consideration" and "paying honor." A better rendering would read: "in your living together, show consideration for your wives as to the weaker sex, offering honor to the woman as also to joint heirs of the gracious gift of life." Greco-Roman authors also held that the physical vulnerability of the female

ought to provoke gentleness and consideration from the husband, tempering rather than inviting any domineering spirit. 1 Peter, however, goes further than this by drawing attention to the Christian wife's status as a co-heir of that gift toward which all Christians' hope is directed. This status must result in the husband honoring the wife as one favored and honored by God, and to filter all his words, attitudes, and actions toward her through this lens. Any attempt to apply 3:1-6 in a way that violates the wife's honor as co-heir of God's kingdom must therefore be ruled out-of-bounds.

The author offers a second safeguard in his concluding summary exhortations in 3:8, which functions here much as Eph 5:21 does for that household code: "Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another [specifically, again, love for one another as that between siblings], a tender heart, and a humble mind." The fact that Christian couples are also children of the same Heavenly Parent, that is, sister and brother, overlays another code of ethics upon the typical patterns of marital roles. The ethic of siblings promotes the quest for harmony and concord — agreement rather than suppression of one voice in favor of another's voice, cooperation for the good of the whole family rather than competition for power and precedence (such as lurks not far beneath the surface of many attempts to revive the patriarchal models of the first century in twentieth and twenty-first century homes). Sympathy, tenderness, and, especially, humility, are antithetical to forcing one's way on another or attempting to assert dominance over another. Perhaps it is here, in the example of Jesus the humble one, that one finds the most powerful, yet overlooked, death-blow to hierarchical and authoritarian arrangements of the Christian household.

Counselors and pastors need especially to be aware of the way the household codes in the New Testament have been used in the lives of their charges (not to mention be cautious about their own application of them to family life). The very Scriptures that can heal are frequently used as weapons of ideological warfare in power struggles and other divisive and hurtful games, and it is sorrowful that the Scriptures are frequently invoked to demean those very daughters God seeks to elevate.

##### *5. Where is God in the midst of Suffering?*

In a letter so focused on the problem of suffering, it is natural to inquire into what this author may contribute to finding God and encountering God's sustaining strength in the midst of suffering. First, it is imperative to remember that 1 Peter does not address suffering in general, such that his remarks on suffering can be applied to the experience of disease or violent crime or mental anguish. Rather, as we have already discussed, the author speaks to the situation of suffering for the sake of doing what is just and for the

sake of being associated with Jesus and his challenge to the world.

The author assures Christians facing such trials that God is present with them in the midst of suffering. It was important to help the believers understand that the resistance they encountered and losses they endured were *not* a sign that they were out of favor with God, but rather assured them that they were moving in precisely the direction that God was leading. First, it was God who provided for their redemption from a futile way of life, dissociation from which is the cause of their present suffering (1:19). God set them on the journey they have begun, and the believers remain “protected by the power of God ... for a deliverance about to be revealed” (1:5) in the midst of their trials. In the midst of the censure and insult they endure, God associates God’s own Spirit with them personally: “If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you” (4:14). Far from separating them from God, their endurance of trials confirms their intimacy with God.

Moreover, the author assures them that God is intensely concerned about each believer in the midst of trial. Quoting Psalm 34:15, he writes: “the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer.” This he turns into a reassuring exhortation in 5:7: “Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.” As did Jesus, Paul, the author of Hebrews and as would John, this author also calls the Christians to take hold of prayer as a powerful resource by which to counter anxiety and fear and to find the strength to persevere. He fully expects that God will intervene to “restore, support, strengthen, and establish” those who have endured suffering for righteousness’ sake (5:10). God is also present to help in the community of faith: “Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies” (4:11). Words of encouragement and direction, acts of love and service, are all signs of God’s power at work to sustain God’s sons and daughters.

As Jesus himself had “entrusted himself to the one who judges justly” (2:23), so Christians who encounter undeserved resistance and deviancy-control measures are called to “entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good” (4:19). Vindication may not come in this life, but the vindication of Jesus’ honor at his resurrection continues to provide the assurance for believers that their dignity and worth, too, will be vindicated by God — on that Day when their present perseverance in suffering will be awarded its due “praise and glory and honor” (1:7).

1 Peter’s assurances about God’s presence and aid in the midst of suffering still offer words of encouragement and strategies for perseverance in cases where the search for light — whether that light means the discovery and relinquishing of dysfunctional relational habits or the exodus from societal



values in favor of God's vision for humanity — results in the experience of hostility, censure, and even violence. It is important to emphasize for such people where God is *not*: God is not in the reproaches and abuse of the unbelievers punishing the sufferers, but *with* the believers in the midst of their experiences of hostility and resistance.

That these believers are "suffering in accordance with God's will" means that their obedience to God's will and alignment with God's cause has resulted in suffering, not that God delights in abusing God's faithful ones nor that God seeks to make life difficult for those who seek to leave behind death-dealing and inauthentic ways of life. Early Christians spoke of sufferings being endured in accordance with God's will as a way of expressing the conviction that the experience of persecution for righteousness' sake was not something beyond God's power, nor did it place one beyond God's favor and help. It also expressed the conviction that the experience of resistance and suffering provided the fire by which the human soul was rendered workable by God, like gold or silver in the smith's oven (see 1:6-7).

Such a view of God's place in the sufferings of the believers ultimately was intended to assist the believers to withstand the pressures that weighed upon them from without, to empower them to remain true to their own choices and to the vision they had accepted for themselves. It also sought to redeem those very experiences by calling attention to the good purposes God could achieve in the believer's life and in the shape of the believer's character by means of the crucible of suffering: the Christian was able to focus thus not on being victimized by unbelievers, but to search out the ways in which his or her virtue, character, and inner strength was being refined. These formulations resulted, of course, in a theological problem with no solution in sight — but it may help to keep pushing past the problematic formulations and inquiring into the pastoral goals that gave rise to them in the first place.<sup>5</sup>

#### 6. *A Word to Elders from an Elder*

The author, "a fellow elder," gives some directions to "the elders" among the many Christians communities in the five provinces he addresses (5:1). One difficulty in knowing how to take his directions is our lack of clarity concerning the organization of the church in the first century. "Elder," "overseer," and "deacon" all appear to have been "offices" by the end of the

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<sup>5</sup>Perhaps no better formulation has been made than Gen 50:20, in which God's ability to redeem and use even that which humans enact with harmful intent comes to powerful expression: "you intended to do harm to me, but God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people."

first century, the latter two receiving much attention in the Pastoral Epistles with regard to qualifications for serving in these capacities. By “elder,” did the author have in mind people named to an appointed office or simply those who, by reason of their seniority in the community, were the “natural” leaders within a particular Christian community? The contrast between the “elders” addressed in 5:1-4 and the “younger ones” in 5:5 suggests that seniority and leadership were closely linked in the early church, as would be expected in the Mediterranean cultures where age, wisdom, and authority were regarded as natural counterparts. The possibility of exercising oversight “under compulsion” (5:2), however, suggests that congregations called upon some of their senior members to look after the local Christian community. We might expect these duties to have included aspects of pastoral care, orchestrating relief within the local church, and presiding over assemblies (not necessarily doing all the teaching or praying or the like, for several local Christians would be regarded as spiritually gifted in such areas).

We should not merely apply the author’s exhortations to “elders” here to “paid staff” (e.g., pastors), although as representatives of the general ministry of the whole church it must apply to them as well. The exhortations need to be extended, however, to all the “natural” leaders in a congregation. Many churches suffer from a lack of indigenous, “natural leadership,” whether because responsibility is deferred to the “paid staff,” because the “elders” in a church are overlooked when responsibilities are delegated, or because those with experience and giftedness nevertheless avoid responsibility within the church. The other side of the spectrum is just as problematic, where a few “elders” attempt to control the congregation. 1 Peter calls for leadership that is both healthy and strong, challenging the elders in churches at both ends of this spectrum.

Caring for one another in the family of faith is no less an obligation than caring for one another in a natural family. Just as the well-functioning natural family exercises this care in diligent and healthful ways, so the well-functioning family of God does the same. Where we err either to the side of neglecting the care of the family or to the side of using care as a means of control, we move toward a dysfunctional family. Lay leadership within the church, whether in administrative capacities, in pastoral care ministries (like the *Stephen Ministries*), or in outreach or education is essential to the growth and health of the family of God. Being nominated to a committee or asked to teach the Senior High can be approached as an unwanted burden or an opportunity to “exercise the oversight” for the good of the family of God. The author clearly hopes that such leaders will adopt the latter approach, understanding that God equips and strengthens those whom God calls out in such ways (4:11). He urges lay leaders (and today we must include paid staff) to understand their

work as an invitation to work with God to strengthen and build the church, and thus to give specific expression to the general obligation to show love for their sisters and brothers.

What motivates these leaders? The author excludes two possible motives immediately, namely material gain and the enjoyment of power over others. In the first century, local leaders would not have been paid but still would have had opportunity to use their position to increase their wealth. Being in charge of relief funds, for example, might have made it tempting to skim off an administrative or handling fee. They might have thought to extort gifts, services, and favors from their sisters and brothers, presenting requests for such goods and services as the suitable "return" for their own generosity and service. Reciprocity was a core value in the Greco-Roman world of patrons, friends, and clients, and could be exploited. This remains a danger facing leaders in the church. Giving of oneself to the young, the homeless, the shut-ins, the unchurched is not to be approached as an opportunity for worldly gains, whether community prestige or networking for one's business, or the like. Moreover, some of the most important work we will ever do in this life is the work for which there is no paycheck. Many are losing sight of this as they shy away from making commitments to services and responsibilities apart from their "paying" jobs.

"Elders" are not to be drawn into the trap of working for money or seeking other temporal compensations for their labors in the family of God. Their reward is imperishable, namely unfading honor in Christ's kingdom: to set one's mind to calculating how to wrangle material or temporal rewards alongside this shows a small spirit. Since many churches have moved to a situation in which some of its leadership is salaried — that is, since the apostolic situation no longer holds — application of the author's words to paid pastors and other staff must take this shift into account. In this regard, pastors are reminded that they went into the work of full-time ministry not for the money but in response to God's call. Salaried church leaders cannot forget this. It does happen from time to time that ministers and their families are unable to meet their necessary expenses because of inadequate compensation. In such cases, ministers need to be honest with their congregations about their needs and congregations need to respond as God (not fiscal conservatism) leads. It is also the case, however, that American culture approaches money and material possessions from the standpoint of "more" rather than "enough." Part of being "examples to the flock" includes modeling some very un-American values, such as discerning when a salary, however small in comparison with many professionals' salaries, is "enough," and understanding that "more" is not necessarily "better." Compensation for one's labor and a benefits package are not the same thing, at least where one takes the promise of 5:4 seriously: "when



the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of honor.”

Healthful leadership also resists the temptation to dominate, and it is a powerful temptation to resist. An “elder” in a local church might regard his recompense for good and faithful service to be the unspoken “right” to have things go his way, both within and beyond his sphere of immediate involvement. A pastor or counselor might forget the healing arts as she seeks to “dominate” the patient in her role as “expert” in a theological disagreement. Whatever the scenario, good shepherding requires the dismissal of every inner drive to dominate. The hierarchy described by the author of 1 Peter is helpful in this regard: there is one chief shepherd. To all other shepherds belongs neither the flock nor the turf, but only the opportunity and obligation to tend what is another’s.

Those who are able to lead without concern for gain or self-assertion are indeed powerful examples to the flock, living parables of Jesus’ own leadership style. There are other ways in which Christians “elders” and other leaders can distinguish themselves for Christ as they distinguish themselves from Western styles and expectations of leaders. One of these involves modeling transparency and vulnerability, refusing to perpetuate the widespread conspiracy of hiding one’s brokenness under a thin veneer of cheerful appearances for fear of non-acceptance. Avoidance of self-disclosure out of this fear is a basic dysfunction in human relationships, although it is often perceived as “strength” in a leader. Within the context of the church, however, any such strategies that limit knowledge of and care for one another — in short, limit opportunities for God’s healing power to be at work — should be rejected.

If leaders are to devote themselves to the care of the family of God, the reciprocal responsibility is clear. Those who benefit from the self-giving of others ought not to make the faithful exercise of vigilant oversight any more difficult than it needs to be: “in the same way, you who are their juniors must submit yourselves to the elders” (5:5). Humility (acting with respect for the honor and contributions of the other) in all our dealings with one another is again the key to the well-functioning church family.

**Church History Experienced:  
A Tour of Great Britain and Ireland**

by William D. Meyer\*

What I saw and experienced during an Ashland Theological Seminary church-history class and tour of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales will undoubtedly differ from what many others on the trip did. This is, quite understandably, because what I saw and experienced was filtered through my personal history and personal theological concerns.

Several general themes stood out to me at most of the church history sites during the visit from May 31, 2000, to June 17, 2000. One of the themes was establishment and whether it really works long term to the advantage of the church and to the glory of God. (My conclusion is that it generally does not.) Another theme is that of the relationship of the church to the larger social issues of the day and noting where the church failed and where the church succeeded. (Puritan intervention in Ireland under Oliver Cromwell is a dramatic example of the former. The Wesleyan campaign against slavery and the slave trade is an example of the latter.)

Nevertheless, most significant for me was reflecting on how I processed the intellectual and theological and personal challenge of complex historical situations and faith journeys different from my own. This theme is basically about tolerance and my own struggle not to react defensively and dismissively to the unfamiliar and the difficult.

**Establishment**

One of the standout impressions for me was the contrast between the early morning worship service at St. Paul's Cathedral in London and three later worship services at All Souls Church, where John Stott is the senior pastor.

Though St. Paul's was architecturally beautiful and is clearly a British national monument (Prime Minister Winston Churchill invested significant human resources to make sure that St. Paul's was saved during the German bombing of London in World War II.), the worship experience for me was somewhat deadening and frankly rather alienating.

Though I have no objection to highly liturgical worship, I noted with sadness that there were fewer than 50 people present for the early worship service. Even though some individuals at St. Paul's cared, the institution was clearly not oriented to the comfort and welcome of outsiders. After riding the subway from our hotel to St. Paul's, I wanted to find the men's bathroom 15 minutes before worship was to start. So I asked the man passing out prayer books at the back of the cathedral where to find it. He directed me outside the cathedral. After walking nearly all the way around the building, I still couldn't

find it. 10 minutes later, I returned for more directions. Then, after going outside again, I did find the building that contained the restrooms. But all the doors were locked.

So when I did return inside the cathedral, I was now late. The worship service had already begun, and I had to enter the quire awkwardly and sit somewhat uncomfortably with my family through the service.

The point being, I think, that St. Paul's is basically a national monument. And the established, institutional church there feels little need to exert itself to welcome the world and present the Gospel in a way that is accessible to those who are not already insiders and members of the club.

I still benefited from participating in the worship service and took communion (for the first time ever on my knees) that morning. But I am already a believer and went to worship despite the inconvenience.

The underlying assumption at St. Paul's seems to be that if the unchurched world wants the Gospel, it can come to the church and accommodate itself to the church's program. At the cathedral, there was no sense that I could detect of a need for the church to affirmatively reach out to the world.

Within the same Church of England establishment, however, the atmosphere at All Souls Church in London couldn't have been more different.

Taking the subway from St. Paul's, I arrived halfway through the morning's first worship service. Even at this early hour, I found only a handful of empty seats on the main floor. However, I was made to feel quite welcome. I was greeted multiple times by strangers, invited to have coffee after worship and was immediately made to feel that I was important to the crowded congregation and that my coming to visit was a significant event.

By contrast, no one greeted me in the tiny group at St. Paul's except the clergy and the man handing out prayer books, and he seemed to view his function at least partially as a gatekeeper, to keep casual tourists away from the quire during worship.

The congregational greeting I received at All Souls was very intentional. It was very clear that people of a variety of ages, of a variety of races, and of a variety of social and occupational classes had been chosen and asked to try to connect with every newcomer. The congregation was interracial, interethnic and international, reflecting very well the demographic makeup of the surrounding Westminster area. I sat next to an elderly Chinese man, who made sure I could follow the Scripture lesson in his Bible.

The second, later morning worship service was absolutely packed, with no open seats either on the floor or in the balcony. There was, however, an overflow room with closed circuit television in the basement. And when Stott himself preached in the evening, the situation was the same.



So it is possible even for congregations of established churches to effectively reach out to the public in a cosmopolitan, 21<sup>st</sup> century environment. But it means work, and it must be very intentional. It would appear to require a mindset similar to that at All Souls , where each member is urged to be a member of a small group and to be a part of some ministry of the church. All Souls very intentionally reaches out to the surrounding business community through noon-time programs and Bible studies and also tries to serve the university community.

The outreach of the church has obviously been very carefully thought through, and a lot of attention is paid to the needs of newcomers. Few assumptions are made about what people know about Christianity. Even during the fairly simple, low-church worship service itself, there are frequent explanations of what is being done and why. There is also an explicit welcome of guests, who are invited from the pulpit to consider attending one of the church's classes that discuss the claims of Christianity. Visitor comfort is also well attended to.

So, even within the established church, it is possible to successfully reach out and evangelize, but doing so requires giving up the comfortable establishment mindset that the world will come to the church and accommodate itself to it.

I really appreciated the architectural magnificence that Anglican establishment and the vast resources of the church-state collaboration had made possible in the construction and maintenance of the Church of England cathedrals. I lamented the vandalism of those cathedrals during the 17<sup>th</sup> century Puritan period, yet I also sympathized with the objections and aims of the Puritans. Though I certainly do not agree with the Puritans that the Mass is idolatry, much of the iconography and statuary that has accumulated in, upon and around the great cathedrals certainly seems to lean in that direction. At least this seems to have become so in some times and places in practice, if not actually so in theory and original intent.

When our group visited St. Andrews, Scotland, June 16, 2000, the ocean-side ruin of St. Andrew's Cathedral, the largest in Scotland before the Reformation, was a memorable sight. I was struck by how the Reformation and its "cleansings" of the churches and its attendant battles, vandalism, and looting of church properties had cost Scotland its largest and grandest church structure. Nevertheless, Scotland emerged with a freer and in many respects purer church, with a vigorous and fairly democratic faith, even if still established through coercive state power. Though the loss of the grand building was tragic, what was gained was of inestimably greater value. The Reformation in Scotland constructed the durable, democratic ecclesiastical framework that has allowed non-established churches organized on the Scots pattern to grow and thrive in

North America and other parts of the world.

So I and all Americans owe a profound debt to John Knox and the Scots reformers, even if disapproving of many of their methods and excesses. Knox might indeed be called one of the American founding fathers, along with England's later Puritan Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell,<sup>1</sup> so great was their ideological influence on the American experiment.

St. Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh, where Knox preached, was one of the high points of the trip, especially my meeting an elderly Scots Presbyterian elder there who was full of faith and full of the significance of the place, which he explained to me at great and gracious length. For instance, he told me that in the Presbyterian view, the spare and fairly plain house of worship is not a cathedral at all. Instead, St. Giles' is simply the High Kirk of Scotland.

In England, the established church has, unfortunately, identified itself profoundly with the English political, military and imperial establishment. So the English cathedrals now seem to be almost more monuments to the glory of a faded monarchy and former empire than monuments to the glory of the unfailing Lord of Lords and his everlasting Kingdom. Almost all the Anglican cathedrals contained prominent military and political monuments. This seemed to me to be much more pronounced in England than in the cathedrals on the continent, where the church is largely disestablished or established in a much milder form. (My memory of one or two German cathedrals is that most of these types of relatively modern martial monuments have been removed, and for good reason.) Several of the English cathedrals we visited contained very prominent regimental chapels and prominently displayed faded British battle flags. At best, it was a mixed message.

The absolutely worst and most jarring example of this downside of Anglican establishment was in Ireland, where the Anglican church now has been disestablished for decades. Unfortunately for the Church of Ireland, its establishment mentality does not seem to have been dislodged, at least not if one looks at the monuments in St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. (In defense of St. Patrick's, it must be pointed out that the pastoral staff there was quite welcoming and accessible during our visit and expressly invited my wife and others to attend Evensong, after which the president of Ireland would speak.

The Anglican Church of Ireland controls both of the great medieval cathedrals of Dublin, the capital of Ireland. The Catholic Church, to which the overwhelming majority of the people of the Republic of Ireland belong, has

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<sup>1</sup> "Oliver Cromwell is one of the most neglected figures in American history." Robert S. Paul, *The Lord Protector: Religion and Politics in the Life of Oliver Cromwell* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964) 7a.

none.

In St. Patrick's Cathedral, the oppressive burden of Irish history and of English overlordship was at its heaviest. The entire left transept, just off the crossing at the center of the cathedral, was filled with rotting British battle flags, most of which were some version of the Union Jack. Their presence, there in the very center of the cathedral, visually assaulted every worshipper. (By contrast, some of the English cathedrals I visited that had such battle flags displayed generally had them in less profusion and in less prominent positions. Bronze military plaques, however, were ubiquitous.)

In the quire at St. Patrick's, each of the stalls was topped with a sword and a tasseled helmet of the Knights of St. Patrick, a now defunct British order of chivalry, created by the British monarchy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to reward Irishmen who promoted British imperial interests. This was also very bad symbolism for today's Ireland.

On the walls, large bronze imperial war monuments were everywhere. The combined effect of all this was to suggest that this building was not singularly dedicated to the glory of God, but to the glory of the Anglican ascendant class and Britain's imperial adventures.

Especially jarring for me, as I sat almost under the cathedral crossing during Evensong, was the arrangement of the Good Samaritan stained glass window opposite me on the right wall of the nave. It was a magnificent window, effectively telling the story of reaching out to mercifully serve an enemy against whom one has real grievances. But the effect was largely cancelled out by the equally prominent bronze regimental plaque beneath. It extolled the heroic deeds of the Irish Hussars during Britain's nakedly imperialistic Boer War, a war of aggression mercilessly waged against a neighbor with whom the British had no real grievance. The real issue was the diamonds that had regrettably been discovered in the neighbor's back yard and not in their own.

The Church of Ireland has had nearly a century to find the right moment and method to get rid of those monstrous, moldering monuments (maybe packing them all off to the basement or bequeathing them to some museum somewhere "for proper care"), but it has failed to do so. (When I commented to our Irish bus driver about the cathedral's inertia against cleaning up in the eight decades since Irish independence, he commented sourly that the anglophile monuments likely would still be there 1,000 years from now.)

The general effect was to symbolically proclaim that thoughtful Irish patriots need not apply (even if actually seeking an alternative to the Catholic Church) and that the Church of Ireland does not wish to play any significant role in the life of modern Ireland. Or at least it does not wish to play any role among Irish people who do not identify with the now deposed ascendant class.



How tragic.

How tragic for Ireland, and for the Church of Ireland, which really could by now be playing a significant prophetic, redemptive and constructive role.

This example is the extreme downside of establishment, and of establishment habits even after being disestablished. When the church makes its bed with the state, sometimes it must continue to lie in it, accepting not only the advantages of the arrangement but also the disadvantages, long after the liaison has been terminated.

### Social Issues

When the president of Ireland, Mary McAleese, appeared at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Sunday, June 11, 2000, for her Millennium speech, she revealed how irrelevant the now disestablished Church of Ireland has allowed itself to become. Properly functioning, one would expect the church to be effectively proclaiming the Good News of Jesus to the larger society. Even if it had to share the limelight with the Catholic Church and other confessions, it could still function prophetically and incarnationally as at least part of the conscience of the nation. One would also expect that by intentionally living and symbolizing the Good News, the church of Jesus could and would give hope and vision to the larger society and the state. It would demonstrate in practical, human terms that there is a way out -- a salvation, if you will, through Jesus Christ -- for both people and societies trapped in intractable human problems.

Instead, this cathedral's sclerotic and unashamedly imperialistic self-identification apparently presented such a political problem to President McAleese that she dared not enter until the last "Amen" of the Evensong service had been spoken.

Then it fell to the head of state, in a startling role reversal, to call upon the church to wake itself up and actually preach and actually be the Gospel. She challenged the church "to preach the Good News of the Spirit ... and be known by the way we love one another. ... We have been prisoners of [our] history ... an arsenal which we ransack for weapons to confirm our sense of victimhood and to identify the enemy."<sup>2</sup>

She also called upon Ireland "to remember the past differently, more generously.

"The past, when used well ... can be used to make us kinder ... We

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<sup>2</sup> Gene McKenna and Niamh Hooper, "President hits out at our culture of sleaze," *Irish Independent* (June 12, 2000) 1.

know what it is to be alienated, to be undervalued" and can be champions of the poor abroad.

Nevertheless, the Church of Ireland seems especially to be a prisoner of its history, especially of its former establishment. And all the churches of Ireland -- Catholic, Anglican and Presbyterian -- at crucial historical junctures have failed to preach the Gospel of Jesus to love neighbor as ourselves. All the churches of Ireland at crucial historical junctures have failed to live the Gospel of Jesus and incarnate his Good News to the larger society. Cromwell's bloody devastation of Ireland -- especially the inexcusable massacres at Drogheda and Wexford -- in the name of the Protestant, Puritan Commonwealth is a spectacular historical example of this, as are today's anti-Catholic rantings of the Presbyterian extremists of Northern Ireland. (None of this, of course, is meant to exonerate any other guilty party in the troubles in Ireland.)

Moving my reflections outside of Ireland and outside of the established church and some of its failures, I must also confess being inspired, frankly moved to tears, standing at John Wesley's tomb in London. I was listening to the account of Wesley's deathbed charge to William Wilberforce to continue the very difficult agitation against the powerful and entrenched forces in England that profited from slavery and the slave trade. This was a clear and inspiring example of the unestablished church doing exactly what it must to live the Gospel. This was after the established Anglican church had thrown away its opportunity a century earlier to fairly easily condemn and therefore probably end North American slavery.

### **Tolerance**

As I contemplated Ireland's troubles, I found my thinking becoming increasingly intolerant and even cynical. I was feeling the internal tug to retreat into black-and-white, reductive, dismissive thinking, rather than grapple, in a godly and humane way, with complex realities that resist such simplistic thinking.

It is, of course, easy to arrogantly take shots at specks in the eye of other cultures, other churches and other people and ignore the planks in ones own. I acknowledge this, even while I acknowledge that to some degree I still do it.

Some of this, I realize, is rooted in cynical, cultic intellectual habits that die hard for me. President McAleese recognized the danger of this kind of thinking as well. "Cynicism builds nothing up. ... It drains energy and leaches acid into hope."

<sup>3</sup> I recognized that some of the failures of the historic church were based upon exactly the same cynicism that I sometimes see in myself. Rather than stay committed to the ethical, theological and intellectual heavy lifting of an authentically lived Christianity, historic figures such as Oliver Cromwell and John Knox reached instead for black-and-white slogans, for the doable, for the winnable, even where they contradicted the ethics, theology and logic of Christianity. Sometimes, I too feel the tug in myself to reach for the easy, the simple, the winnable.

President McAleese, who went out of her way to quote Presbyterians and Methodists, called upon all of Ireland's believers to live authentic lives of faith.

Another of the unexpected benefits of the trip was seeing myself interacting with the other people on the trip, many of whom were fascinating and inspiring people, and seeing myself respond to the inevitable interpersonal stresses that occur on any group venture. There were some very interesting interactions involving me and others. Some were successes, some were failures of sorts, but mostly they were just interesting and somewhat unexpected human interactions. So I was prompted to reflect on effectiveness of my efforts and others' to authentically live the Gospel each day. There were more than a few notes to myself in my journal to mind the gap between my intentions and my actual performance in my daily human interactions.

So the lessons were both personal and historical – but mostly they kept working back to personal, even when looking at very significant historical events where the church and its leaders had failed to live and proclaim the Gospel effectively.

Yet just as I recoiled from the failures of others, I kept seeing many of the same qualities in myself that led to those failures in others. This wasn't supposed to happen. The trip was supposed to be much more sterile and clean.

I was supposed to be able to keep the lessons at a distance, in other people's lives, in another culture and certainly in the domain of the cognitive, not the domain of the emotional or the relational.

Then again, maybe it was supposed to happen this way. Maybe some of the lessons were supposed to be rather up close and personal. The largest lessons of the trip are introspective. They have to do with watching myself and others grapple with the Gospel imperatives to respond in a Christ-like way to the concrete challenges of life as we actually live it every day. There is, after all, no other way to live life. It must be lived historically, in a concrete time, place, culture and situation. Every day.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



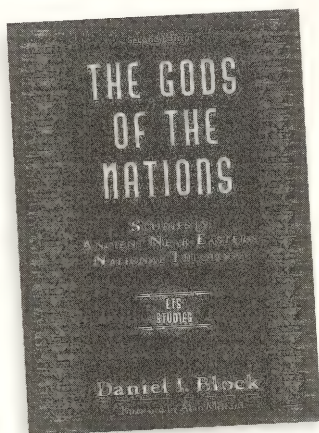
The cultural and historic distance experienced on the trip was both an asset and a liability. In looking at another culture or at another time, distance often allows an outsider to see much more clearly than an insider what the gross problems are and the large picture of what is going on. Nevertheless, the same distance also often prevents outsiders from understanding the details: the subtle problems, nuances and complications that make the problems so difficult in the actual history lived by the insider. The experience of cultural and historical distance also prompted me to further introspection. What are the larger lessons here? How does this situation compare to mine? What is the application for me? How am I doing with the sorts of issues that troubled another culture and another time? What could I be doing differently and be doing better?

In the end, most of this seemed to boil down to President McAleese's challenge to the Church of Ireland, and, indeed, to all believers: Authentically proclaim the Good News and authentically live the Good News of Jesus so as to give redeeming hope and vision to our troubled world.

May it be so. Even in the church. Even in my life.

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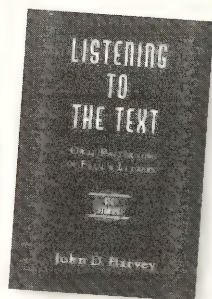
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**Transformational Leadership:  
Theory and Reflections**

Richard Parrott\*

*"Be transformed by the renewing of your minds..."*  
(Romans 12:2)

Consider excerpts of four conversations:

Your organization is guided by vision and values. I know there are times you make hard decisions. I also know you surprise people by making the tough decisions in the right way. This is what I want to know: How do you recognize a decision of organizational values rather than organizational profit? And, what do you have to do internally to make the decision, especially when it is costly? (Author to Executive Vice-President of State Farm Insurance)

And we couldn't agree on the subject of my presentation. But then, it came to me as a revelation; the content doesn't matter. These people just need to connect. They don't need more information, they need to want more from what they are doing. (Executive Director of the Program on Non-Profit Organizations to the author)

You have to love the process. It is not the paper, but the process that matters. Most of what you learn never goes in the paper, but the process changes the way you think; it gives foundation to ministry. (Faculty members of ATS discussing the doctoral dissertation with the author)

Our love for Jesus must be greater than our love of money or fame or anything else. (Author's pastor in a recent sermon)

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Each statement is an expression of the “new leadership paradigm” (Bryman 1992). Transformational leadership is concerned with vision, values, ethics, and relationships. It is a process of leadership in which the motives, needs, and humanity of followers is given full consideration. At the heart of the process is the visionary leader.

Transformational leadership is making an impact on the church. In August, 1999, Noel Tichy, theorist and teacher of transformational leadership (Tichy and DeVanna 1990; Tichy 1997), spoke to the Willow Creek gathering of church leaders, the largest annual conference on Leadership in the evangelical world. Ten years earlier, Lyle Schaller introduced the term to church leadership, “The transformational leader is driven by a vision for a new tomorrow, wins supporters and followers for that vision, and transforms the congregation” (Anderson 1990, 188). Of particular interest to the community of Ashland Theological Seminary is the incorporation of the term in the mission statement of the new Sandberg Leadership Center, “We are a center of transformational learning, committed to the spiritual and character formation of servant leaders who will make a difference in business, government, the church and society” (Finks and Parrott 2000).

The purpose of this paper is to present the theory of transformational leadership as found in the social sciences and to offer reflections on the practice, biblical foundations, and personal implications of the theory.

## I. Theory

First coined by Downton (1973), the significance of transformational leadership emerged in the classic work of the political sociologist, James McGregor Burns (1978). Burns distinguishes two types of leaders: transactional and transformational. Transformational leaders initiate and maintain a relational process that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower. Mahatma Gandhi is the classic example. Transformational leadership is rooted in shared vision and concern for the needs of followers.

Transformational leadership is closely linked to the theory of charismatic leadership (House 1976)<sup>1</sup>. Such leaders demonstrate five

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<sup>1</sup> The classic definition of the charismatic leader is a special personality characteristic that gives a person superhuman or exceptional powers and is reserved for a few, is of divine origin, and results in the person being treated as

characteristics: 1) modeling of beliefs and values, 2) appearing competent to followers, 3) stating goals ideologically and with moral overtones, 4) having high expectations for and confidence in followers, and 5) motivating followers through affiliation, power, and esteem. House admits that charismatic leadership tends to emerge in times of distress.

A refined version of transformational leadership theory was set down by Bernard Bass (1985). Extending the work of Burns and House, Bass describes transactional and transformational leadership as a single continuum (Yammarino 1993). Transformational leaders move people to go beyond expectations. They help people transcend self-interest for the sake of the greater good. They address the higher-level needs of followers (Bass 1985).

In his recent book, Avolio (1999) elaborates on the dynamics of the "model of transformational and transactional leadership" (Bass 1985, 1990; Bass and Avolio 1993, 1994). Transformational leadership is characterized by four factors. Transactional leadership is characterized by two factors.

### Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders are concerned with two issues: the performance of followers and the development of followers (Avolio 1999; Bass and Avolio 1990a). These leaders lift followers beyond self-interest with strong internal values and ideals (Kuhnert 1994). Four factors (known as the Four "I's") emerge:

First, *idealized influence*. This is charisma. Leaders are strong role models that people want to emulate. They have high standards and can be counted on to do the right thing. They have deep respect for people and place deep trust in them. They provide vision and mission. Followers say of these leaders: I feel good when I am around them; I have complete faith in them; I am proud to be associated with them.<sup>2</sup>

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a leader (Weber 1947). This emphasis on personality must be brought into balance by recognizing the important role played by followers who validate charisma (Bryman 1992; House 1976). For the most recent revisions of the theory see Conger and Kanungo, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> The expressions of followers found in the discussion of each factor are adapted from the leadership instrument MLQ, copyright 1992 by B. M. Bass and B. J. Avolio. For reliability and validity see Bass and Avolio, 1993. Copies of the MLQ can be obtained from Mind Garden, Inc., 1690 Woodside Rd., Suite 202, Redwood City, CA 94061. 650-261-3500. There is an

Second, *inspirational motivation*. Leaders cultivate commitment to a shared vision. Using symbols and emotions, they focus the efforts of the group with high expectations and team spirit. Followers say of these leaders: they say in a few simple words what we can and should do; they provide appealing images of what we can do; they help us find meaning in our work.

Third, *intellectual stimulation*. Leaders stimulate others to be creative and innovative. They challenge beliefs and values, and they encourage followers to challenge the leader and the organization. Such leaders support creative problem solving and new approaches. Followers say of these leaders: they help me think about old problems in new ways; they give me new ways to look at puzzling things; they help me rethink ideas I never questioned before.

Fourth, *individualized consideration*. Leaders support individuals by carefully listening, acting as coach and advisor, seeking to assist individuals to become more actualized. They help followers grow through personal challenges. At times the leader may be directive with a high degree of structure, while at other times s/he may deepen the relationship with the follower. Followers say of these leaders: they help me develop; they let me know how they think I am doing; they give me personal attention when I feel rejected.

### Transactional Leadership

The transactional leader does not consider the needs of each individual. Transactional leaders do not focus on personal development. Transactional leaders exchange things of value so that work may be done and goals accomplished (Kuhnert 1994). It is in the follower's best self-interest to do what the transactional leader wants done (Kuhnert and Lewis 1987). Two factors emerge:

First, *contingent reward*. The key competency for the transactional leader is to negotiate fair outcomes. The leader obtains an agreement on what needs to be done and what the payoff will be. The effort of followers is exchanged for specific rewards. Followers say of these leaders: they let me know what I have to do and what reward I will get; they provide me with recognition and rewards when I reach my goals; they show me what others receive when they reach their goals.

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abbreviated version of the MLQ called the MLQ-6S.



Second, *management-by-exception*. The second tool for transactional leaders is corrective criticism. It is negative feedback coupled with negative reinforcement. There are two strategies: a) monitor employee patterns, watch for mistakes and violations, then take corrective action; or b) monitor work outcomes, watch for sub-standard work and problems, then take corrective action. Followers say of such leaders: they are satisfied when I meet the agreed upon standard; they don't interfere as long as things are working; they tell me what is expected in my work.

An analysis of thirty-nine studies in transformational leadership found that individuals who exhibit transformation behaviors (the Four "I's") were perceived as more effective and had better work outcomes than leaders who exhibit only transactional behavior (Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam 1996).

Two other research groups began investigating transformational leadership using open-ended questions and content analysis. Bennis and Nanus (1985) interviewed 90 leaders and report four common strategies: articulating a shared vision, being a social architect, creating trust, and creatively fusing a sense of self with the work. In a similar research model, Tichy and DeVanna (1986, 1990) interviewed 12 CEO's on how they carried out the change process. The common pattern was a "Three Act" process of: Act 1) recognizing the need for change; Act 2) creating a shared vision for change; and, Act 3) institutionalizing change.

## II. Reflections

As I move from theory into reflection, my paper will move from objective to subjective, from formal to informal (from transactional to more transformational). What I want to share is out of my own heart and mind. These are issues that matter to me in my attempt to be a transformational leader at The Sandberg Leadership Center. These are my struggles and convictions, expressing my values and uncertainties. Like you, I am much more comfortable telling you what I know rather than opening up who I am. Yet, transformational leadership begins with appropriate transparency.

I am going to reflect in three ways: on practice, on biblical foundations, and on personal implications. My thoughts are not complete. They will change in the months and years before me. But, for now, these are points of conversation with the challenges I face in learning to be a transformational leader.

The words that follow are "Richard's Reflections." They start that way. However, it is my hope that these thoughts will cause you to reflect, question, converse, challenge, and commit. It is when these written

reflections fade and your own reflections come into focus that I fulfill my hope of being some small part of the transformational process in your life.

### **On the practice of transformational leadership.**

Transformational leadership is a balancing act. For example, I must focus on shared vision with a group and also on individual development. I must focus on the greater good of the organization while also concerning myself with each individual's needs. I must focus on clear values that act as non-negotiables while engendering genuine respect for opposing views. I must focus on motivating beyond the realm of self-interest yet attend to the personal fulfillment of each person who works in the organization. I find the practice of transformational leadership fraught with temptation.

First, *it is tempting to cloak transactional behavior under transformational language.* Many churches have a vision statement. Let me ask, does your church have a shared vision? Many churches have leadership training classes. Do you evaluate the personal development that results in people who give the time to go through the program? Many churches have ministry teams. For teams to be empowering, teams must have power to make real decisions. Do they?

I must speak a strong word with leaders who seek to be transformational: integrity. You can use many transactional programs half-heartedly in the church, and people will accept it; the latest evangelism program, the next giving campaign, the most recent training package. If you falter on any of these, people grumble a bit and the church goes on. However, transformational language is different. It is personal. It is full of promise. It is demanding of sacrifice. If you or I falter here, the results are personal. If you say "shared vision... respect opposing views... team ministry... deep trust in people," you must back it up with behavior. Fail here, and people will not think you incompetent but immoral. Fail here, and people will resist commitment the next time.

Second, *it is tempting to forget the importance of good transactional leadership.* A good transactional leader negotiates fair rewards. Imagine an organization where the rewards are unfair. A good transactional leader makes tasks and roles clear. Imagine an organization where you don't know what's expected of you or what authority you have. A good transactional leader provides appropriate recognition. Imagine an organization where you are never recognized for goals achieved. A good transactional leader corrects what is wrong. Imagine an organization where problems are never addressed and negative behavior is ignored.

I believe many organizations need to address quality transactional leadership as they become transformational. I would go so far as to state that transformational leadership is supported by good transactional practices. When the distribution of bread was unfair (transactional practices), the transforming power of the church ground to a halt (Acts 6:1). When transactional practices were in place, transformation emerged (Acts 6:7).

I have always been naturally inspirational, but I have not always been transformational. My incompetence came at the point of not knowing how to provide the structure and support for change. There is a level of rewards, recognition, roles, standards, and fairness that acts like a foundation. As I remember, God in grace sent the right people who quietly provided the needed pilings and framework. I am finding that it is good to reach for the stars as long as the organization is well grounded.

Third, *it is tempting to serve the wrong master*. Organizations with clear and positive transactional practices often find it difficult to move into a transformational realm. This is indicative of the famous seven last words of the church, "We-never-did-it-that-way-before." The question I ask constantly is this: do transactional practices support or stifle transformational processes? Let me ask you the question in several ways: does your decision making process develop wisdom or despair in individuals? Does your problem solving invite or reject opposing ideas? Does your recognition procedure reward or punish "beyond the call of duty" behavior?

You may be leading an organization strapped by a transactional mindset. Remember, the only time a person willingly gets out of a comfortable chair is when it becomes a hot seat. Transformational leaders are change agents. This means initiating instability, fostering opposing views, and implementing new directions. Not everybody likes this. And when you do it, they won't like you either. Learn to ask yourself (and then others): what is happening now (the facts)? Why is it happening (the motives)? What will happen if you continue this way (the predictions)? What are you willing to do to make a difference (the commitment)? (Markham 1999). Put yourself in the hot seat before you put someone else there.

### **On the biblical foundations of transformational leadership**

My first observation concerning the biblical foundations of transformational leadership is that I am not trained to make such declarations. I have a Master of Divinity degree of some years ago and twenty-plus years of pastoral ministry. This is a far cry from advanced degrees in hermeneutics, historical theology, original languages, and all the



skills associated with the kind of person who would dare comment on “the biblical foundations” of anything.

Academically, I am not qualified. As the leader of a Christian organization, however, I am required to deal with transformation and Scripture. The transformational model is secular in origin. It uses many terms that have spiritual and Christian overtones. I would not declare the model as anti-Christian or un-Christian, but its foundations are non-Christian. This word of caution is echoed in the synoptic Gospels. The word “transformed” (*metamorphoo*) “is used four times (Matt. 17:2; Mk. 9:2; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18) and is apparently deliberately avoided once. This omission is in the Lucan account of the transfiguration of Jesus, possibly because Luke did not want to use a term which could invite comparison with the pagan ideas of transformation” (Liefeld, 861-862).

As a place to begin this search for foundations, consider a familiar verse: “*Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added unto you*” (Matthew 6:31). This is, at once, a word of great transformation or the lowliest of transactions. To the transformed heart, it is a verse of inspiration, it declares the grand will of God, it calls to higher needs and loftier motives, it empowers the believer to risk all and rest in the care of the Father. Yet, to the heart locked in transaction, the verse cuts a bargain with the Almighty: “God, I will seek Your Kingdom, but You have to give me the stuff.”

Like most children growing up in the faith, I considered the way of Christ to be a way of transactions. The language was transactional with talk of rewards and punishments, crowns and cruelty. The common illustrations were variations on the courtroom transactions. The worst image, to my recollection, was God so angry he beat up on a nice person like Jesus so that he didn't have to beat up on me. We were asked to “put faith” in this angry God who “really loves you.” Such faith turns life into a hard path of keeping on God's good side or at least keeping off his radar screen. We learned that, like a grand transactional manager, “the Father up above is looking down...” with rewards and punishments for little boys and girls.

This is a child's twisted understanding of Christianity. However, deep-seated memories, homiletic reinforcement, and theological immaturity continue to feed this childish and pagan form of Christian faith. Appeasing an angry god is paganism. It is transactional religion: “If I do this, God won't get angry; and if I do that, God owes me a blessing.” This is not the Christianity of the early church. William Neal cuts to the heart of transactional faith:

It is worth noting that the “fire and brimstone” school of theology who revel in ideas such as that Christ was made a sacrifice to appease an

angry God, or that the cross was a legal transaction in which an innocent victim was made to pay the penalty for the crimes of others, a propitiation of a stern God, find no support in Paul. These notions came into Christian theology by way of legalistic minds of the medieval churchmen; they are not biblical Christianity (Neal 1965, 89-90).

The cross is not God inflicting wounds on another, but God receiving the suffering himself. Isaiah saw that the "servant" would suffer at the hands of God; but, who would have believed that the "servant" would be God. All of God was in Christ. "God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell within him" (Col. 1:19) and "in Christ the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form" (Col. 2:9). The incarnate God was on the cross. It was there that "God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them" (2 Cor. 5:19). This is not mere exchange but real change. It is not a simple transaction in the best interest of both parties: this is transformation. This is based in higher needs, loftier motives, a new relationship, a transforming vision and Kingdom values.

Atonement cannot be left as a simple transaction. It must be transformational. It results in the transformation of the sinner (2 Cor. 5:17). But, the grand beginning of transformation was when "the Word became flesh" (John 1:14). It has been suggested that the incarnation that began in the womb of Mary was completed on the cross of Calvary (conversation with Dr. Dan Hawk of ATS). When incarnation and atonement are wedded as two parts of the same event, the transaction of the cross is a transformation of the soul. What we see in the cross is not an angry deity transacting his vengeance on the innocent, but the loving and grace of God transforming his ways with us. In this sense, God changed.

John Stott writes, "If it may be said that the propitiation 'changed' God, or that by it he changed himself, let us be clear he did not change from wrath to love, or from enmity to grace, since his character is unchanging. What the propitiation changed was his dealings with us" (Stott 1986, 174). Stott agrees with P. T. Forsyth, "The distinction I ask you to make is between a change of feeling and a change of treatment... God's feeling toward us never needed to be changed. But God's treatment of us, God's practical relation to us – that had to change" (Forsyth 1910, 105).

I believe this ne'er-do-well theologian is far enough out on the limb to open a conversation on the theological implications of transformational leadership. From this perch, let me state my point: you cannot be a transformational leader if you are caught in a transactional form of Christianity. Your theology precedes your practice. And, your experience precedes your theology. The admonition of Paul is clear (he was not afraid

of the pagan origins of the word), “Be transformed (*metamorphoo*) by the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 12:2).

I want to stress the point because I believe there is danger lurking in the transformational model of leadership. It can be practiced as the emergence of an individual hero rather than the implementation of a relational process. It has been criticized as elitist and anti-democratic, as if the leader acts alone and apart from the group (Avolio 1999). It has the potential for abuse. It is concerned with changing people, changing values, and moving into new vision. Who determines if the new direction is good and affirming? Who decides if the new vision is a better one? The nature of transformational leadership opens itself to destructive purposes (Howell and Avolio 1992).

The transformational leader needs a foundation of biblical reflection and spiritual formation. The transactions of the church may not require struggling with profound theological issues. This could be debated, but I am convicted with this truth: the transformational leader needs lifelong practices of biblical reflection and spiritual formation. They are needed to protect the church and to guard the soul of the leader.

As a relational process, both the leader and the organization face the potential dangers of the transformational realm. Biblical reflection and spiritual formation protect the leader from the temptation to become the hero, from taking authority that belongs only in Heaven, from moving along the path of self-despair and self-destruction. Biblical reflection and spiritual formation protect the church by moving her from the temptation to trust in human leadership to deep faith in the true Head, from thoughtless emulation of a leader to a thoughtful search of Scripture, from blind commitment to an institutional vision to whole-hearted devotion to God.

With thoughts of such danger abounding, it is understandable why many leaders and organizations retreat to a simple level of transactions: a system of rewards and punishments that serves the self-interest of both the leader and the followers. It is comfortable. But there is a third party left out of the equation, “the kingdom of God and his righteousness” (Matt. 6:31). Transformational leadership is fraught with danger, but if you retreat to a transactional church, you face certain spiritual death. Living at the level of transaction only is like living under a veil. Vision is blurred and glory is faded. The wonder of the Gospel is found in the changing presence of God’s gracious love. The transforming power of God removes the veil, and we “are being transformed (*metamorphoo*) into his likeness with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:18). Transformational leadership is the high road of adventure; it is life



with full vision; it is partnership with the One who was transformed (Matt. 17:2) and who now transforms us.

### **On the personal implications of transformational leadership.**

This is my first publication in the Ashland Journal. Reflecting on my feelings, I am both fearful (Did I meet the standards of my peers?) and excited (Can I go beyond what is expected?). I asked a colleague to review the material. He read the work and read my face. "You have met the bar," he said. Ah, the standard has been reached. Then he went on, "And, I think you have something important to say."

He invested the next moments sharpening my thinking, clarifying my logic, and challenging my heart. He then invited me to join him in a conversation concerning his own research. He convinced me I had something to offer. I wanted to do and be my best. That was a small transformational moment. He lifted me from "Is it good enough?" to "You can make a difference."

From this little incident, notice two emotions: fear and excitement. This is the way I approach new situations. It is the way most people approach change. Fear is the rational mind's concern with transactional issues. Excitement is the soul's hope for transformation. For example, when the new pastor arrives, the church is filled with fear and excitement. "I am nervous about the pastor changing things" and at the same time, "I sure hope the pastor helps us change for the better." New students on the seminary campus are filled with fear and excitement. They fear transactional issues involving grades, degree requirements, and payment schedules. However, they also carry the hope of a transforming experience that will open mind and heart to the presence of God and meaningful ministry in the Kingdom. "I'm concerned I will not be good enough" and "This will be the best experience ever."

When I face a new assignment, a speaking opportunity, making a new friend, expanding the network of contacts, or leading The Sandberg Leadership Center, I face the marble effect of fear and excitement. There is concern over transactions – the standards, the expectations, the requirements, the passing grade, actions in my best interest. There is also hope in the possibility of transformation – new values, glorious vision, higher ideals, lofty motives, grand possibilities for the greater good.

My own experience goes like this: when the fear is great, the excitement of transformation fades. When the new pastor "changes too many things" (too many patterns of transactions), the hope of "becoming a better church" (transformational vision) slips away in the rubble of gossip

and criticism. If the new student is overwhelmed by fear of grades and requirements, the focus on being transformed blurs into a fearful and transactional struggle to make the grade.

When fear is overcome, profound change takes hold. It is the church convinced that the new pastor is more interested in making them better rather than forcing them to be different. It is the new student who sets aside the fear of failure and embraces the possibility of experiencing God in a seminary classroom. People enter the transformational realm, not in the absence of fear, but by overcoming fear. The first and greatest task of leadership is to “be courageous” (Joshua 1:6, 7, 9, 18). I am happy to be creative. I can even be clever on occasion. But, to be courageous is costly.

Transformational leadership requires courage. It is not the courage of risking life and limb like a soldier at Gettysburg or on the shores of Normandy. But it is risking the possibility of disapproval, rejection, misunderstanding, and being featured in the next round of gossip. It is occasionally risking your bread and belonging. Henry Ford II said, “If you are not willing to risk your job, you are probably not doing your job” (Robert Quinn, Executive Education, Seminar #U002013, March 27-31, 2000, University of Michigan). There are times when transformational leadership demands that you put it all on the line. “Be strong and very courageous,” said the Lord to Joshua, and to you (Joshua 1:7).

I find courage in meaningful relationships such as the ones reported at the beginning of these personal reflections. I find courage in developing competency in my task. I find courage is based in a transformational relationship with my Lord. And, I find that courage is what I want to pass on to other leaders.

Change is here, and change is hard. To lead in an era of transformation will call for practical knowledge. To implement transformation will require people skills. But, to make transformation last takes moral courage. You and I need a safe place to discover courage in times of need. This place is nestled between developing personal competence, growing in spiritual depth, and being nurtured in meaningful relationships. This is transformational to a leader.

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## **Helpful Worldwide Web Sites**

David W. Baker

There follows a categorized list of Web sites which some faculty members at ATS have found useful. All are to be preceded by the following: <http://> . The only Web site which we endorse is our own ([www.ashland.edu/seminary/seminary.html](http://www.ashland.edu/seminary/seminary.html)), but we hope readers might find value among the others listed. Dr Russell Morton, Research Librarian at ATS, has compiled a very useful site with numerous helpful links at: [www.ashland.edu/~rmorton2](http://www.ashland.edu/~rmorton2). An ongoing resource is the "Internet for Christians Newsletter" at: [www.gospelcom.net/ifc/newsletter.shtml](http://www.gospelcom.net/ifc/newsletter.shtml). By their very nature, Web sites are ephemeral, so some might not still be active by the time you try them.

## **BIBLICAL STUDIES**

Additional sites will be listed in the future, but a useful gateway to numerous sites is found at **The Society for Old Testament Study** at [www.trinity-bris.ac.uk/sots/resources.html](http://www.trinity-bris.ac.uk/sots/resources.html)

## **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

### **Youth Ministry Resources**

**A World of Ministry:** [www.webcom.com/nlnnet/xian/xianchu1.html](http://www.webcom.com/nlnnet/xian/xianchu1.html)

**Christian Endeavor International:** <http://www.x-endeavor.org/home>

**Christian World Online:** [chreuropeonline.hypermart.net/world](http://chreuropeonline.hypermart.net/world)

**Christian Youth News Online** (now Stir Magazine):

[www.stirmagazine.com](http://www.stirmagazine.com)

**LeadershipU:** <http://www.leaderu.com>

**The Omnilist of Kids, Fun, and Humor:**

[hometown.aol.com/clinksgold/omnent.htm](http://hometown.aol.com/clinksgold/omnent.htm)

**Jobs in ministry:** [www.ministryjobs.com](http://www.ministryjobs.com)

**Susan's CCM Directory:**

[www-personal.umich.edu/~mozzzer/cmusic.html](http://www-personal.umich.edu/~mozzzer/cmusic.html)

**Teen Challenge:** [www.teenchallenge.com](http://www.teenchallenge.com)

**Youth Ministry Newsletter Exchange:** [www.cm-online.net/ym](http://www.cm-online.net/ym)

**Youth Pastors:** [www.youthpastor.com](http://www.youthpastor.com)

**Youth Specialties:** [www.gospelcom.net/ys](http://www.gospelcom.net/ys)

### **Focus on the Family Sites**

**Focus.com:** [www.family.org/welcome/intl](http://www.family.org/welcome/intl)

**Pure Intimacy:** [www.pureintimacy.org](http://www.pureintimacy.org) Concerning sexual addiction.

**Breakaway Magazine:** [www.breakawaymag.com](http://www.breakawaymag.com) For teen guys.

**Brio Magazine:** [www.briomag.org](http://www.briomag.org) For teen girls.

### **CHURCH HISTORY PRIMARY DOCUMENTS**

(Edited from a compilation by David Instone Brewer, Tyndale House,  
Cambridge. See [www.tyndale.cam.ac.uk](http://www.tyndale.cam.ac.uk))

### **Catholic Documents**

**New Advent:** [newadvent.org/fathers/index.html](http://newadvent.org/fathers/index.html) (including a very helpful encyclopaedia: [www.newadvent.org/cathen/](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/) and the full Summa Theologica: [newadvent.org/summa](http://newadvent.org/summa))

**Contra Gentiles:** [www.nd.edu/Departments/Maritain/etext/gc.htm](http://www.nd.edu/Departments/Maritain/etext/gc.htm)

**Councils before 1450:**

[cedar.evansville.edu/~ecoleweb/documentscou.html](http://cedar.evansville.edu/~ecoleweb/documentscou.html)

**Later Councils:**

**Trent:** [history.hanover.edu/early/trent.htm](http://history.hanover.edu/early/trent.htm)

**Vatican II:** [www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/v1.html](http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/v1.html)

**Documents for various Orders & Organisations:**

[listserv.american.edu/catholic/](mailto:listserv.american.edu/catholic/)

**Encyclicals and Other Papal Documents:**

[listserv.american.edu/catholic/church/papal/papal.html](mailto:listserv.american.edu/catholic/church/papal/papal.html)

### **Orthodox Documents**

**St. Pachomius Library:**

[www.ocf.org/OrthodoxPage/reading/St.Pachomius/  
globalindex.html](http://www.ocf.org/OrthodoxPage/reading/St.Pachomius/globalindex.html)

### **Reformation Texts**

**Hanover texts:** [history.hanover.edu/early/theology.html](http://history.hanover.edu/early/theology.html) (including Baxter, Bunyan, Calvin, Elizabethan Homilies, Fox, Hooker, Law, Luther, Melancthon, Wesley and others)

**Project Wittenberg for Luther related texts:**

[www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-  
home.html](http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-home.html)

### **General collections of historical texts**

**Ecole (texts up to 1500):** [cedar.evansville.edu/~ecoleweb](http://cedar.evansville.edu/~ecoleweb)

**Christian Classics Ethereal Library:** [www.ccel.org](http://www.ccel.org)



**The Internet Medieval Sourcebook** (covering a wide historical period): [www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook2.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook2.html)

**Theology Library:** [www.mcgill.pvt.k12.al.us/jerryd/cm/thltxt.htm](http://www.mcgill.pvt.k12.al.us/jerryd/cm/thltxt.htm)

**Project Gutenberg:** [ostpromo.net/pg](http://ostpromo.net/pg)

### **Greek and Latin original texts**

These are usually only commercially available.

**Greek texts** up to about 600 CE are on a Thesaurus Linguae Graecae CD: [www.tlg.uci.edu/](http://www.tlg.uci.edu/)

**Latin texts:** Patrologia Latina: [pld.chadwyck.co.uk](http://pld.chadwyck.co.uk) (expensive)

Web collections include:

**Bibliotheca Augustana:**

[www.fh-augsburg.de/~harsch/a\\_index.htm](http://www.fh-augsburg.de/~harsch/a_index.htm)

**Perseus** (a growing set of mainly early texts, with translations):  
[perseus.csad.ox.ac.uk/Texts.html](http://perseus.csad.ox.ac.uk/Texts.html)

## **COUNSELING RESOURCES**

### **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

- a. **American Association of Christian Counselors:** [www.aacc.net/](http://www.aacc.net/)
- b. **Christian Association for Psychological Studies:** [www.caps.net/](http://www.caps.net/)
- c. **American Counseling Association:** [www.counseling.org/](http://www.counseling.org/)
- d. **Ohio Counseling Association Counselor Links:**  
[www.ohiocounselingassoc.com/counselorlinks.html](http://www.ohiocounselingassoc.com/counselorlinks.html)
- e. **American Psychological Association:** [www.psych.org/](http://www.psych.org/)
- f. **American Psychiatric Association:** [www.psych.org/main.html](http://www.psych.org/main.html)
- g. **Mental Health Associations Indices with hotlinks:**  
[seamonkey.ed.asu.edu/%7Egail/assoc.htm](http://seamonkey.ed.asu.edu/%7Egail/assoc.htm)  
[www2.cybernex.net/%7ejas/index.html](http://www2.cybernex.net/%7ejas/index.html)

### **STATE AND FEDERAL RESOURCES**

- a. **Ohio Counselor and Social Worker Board:**  
[www.state.oh.us/csw/](http://www.state.oh.us/csw/)
- b. **Ohio's Laws and Rules online:**  
[www.state.oh.us/ohio/ohiolaws.htm](http://www.state.oh.us/ohio/ohiolaws.htm)
- c. **National Institute of Mental Health :** [www.nimh.nih.gov/](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/)
- d. **National Institute on Drug Abuse:**  
[www.nida.nih.gov/NIDAHome1.html](http://www.nida.nih.gov/NIDAHome1.html)
- e. **National Institutes of Health (NIH):** [www.nih.gov/](http://www.nih.gov/)

## DATABASES

- a. **PsychInfo database** (the premier psychological database):  
[www.ashland.edu/library/lib.html](http://www.ashland.edu/library/lib.html)
- b. **Medline** (using Internet Grateful Med for searching, the premier medical database): [igm.nlm.nih.gov/](http://igm.nlm.nih.gov/)
- c. **ERIC database** (education database, including counselor education): [ericir.syr.edu/Eric/](http://ericir.syr.edu/Eric/)

## ELECTRONIC REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- a. **Online Dictionary of Mental Health:**  
[www.shef.ac.uk/~psysc/psychotherapy/index.html](http://www.shef.ac.uk/~psysc/psychotherapy/index.html)
- b. **Electronic Dictionaries and Other Reference Works:**  
[www.niss.ac.uk/lis/dictres.html](http://www.niss.ac.uk/lis/dictres.html)
- c. **Psychology Related Electronic Journals and Periodicals**  
[psych.hanover.edu/Krantz/journal.html#psychjournal](http://psych.hanover.edu/Krantz/journal.html#psychjournal)
- d. **The Student Counseling Virtual Pamphlet Collection**  
[uhs.bsd.uchicago.edu/scrs/vpc/virtulets.html](http://uhs.bsd.uchicago.edu/scrs/vpc/virtulets.html)

## TREATMENT GUIDELINES

- a. **AHCPR clinical protocols** - government sponsored treatment protocols: [www.ahcpr.gov/](http://www.ahcpr.gov/)
- b. **BehaveNet® Directory: Treatment Guidelines:**  
[www.behavenet.com/guidelines.htm](http://www.behavenet.com/guidelines.htm)
- c. **Medscape, Treatment of Panic Disorder and Agoraphobia**  
[www.medscape.com/Medscape/psychiatry/ClinicalMgmt/CM.v01/public/index-CM.v01.html](http://www.medscape.com/Medscape/psychiatry/ClinicalMgmt/CM.v01/public/index-CM.v01.html)

## OTHER RESOURCES

- a. **Mental Health Net** (for mental health professionals and laypeople): [www.mentalhelp.net/](http://www.mentalhelp.net/)
- b. **The Company Therapist** (examples of patient files)  
[www.thetherapist.com/Introduction.html](http://www.thetherapist.com/Introduction.html)
- c. **Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling**  
[home.okstate.edu/homepages.nsf/toc/ce-index](http://home.okstate.edu/homepages.nsf/toc/ce-index)
- d. **Free Counseling Software:**  
[www2.uta.edu/cussn/diskcopy/diskcopy.htm](http://www2.uta.edu/cussn/diskcopy/diskcopy.htm)

## **EVANGELISM AND CHURCH GROWTH**

**Evangelism/Church Growth Resources:** [www.ashland.edu/~rwaters](http://www.ashland.edu/~rwaters) -

This is a personal web site with several pages of links and of resources related to evangelism, church growth, renewal, church planting, and much more.

**New Life Ministries:** [www.NewLifeMinistries-NLM.org](http://www.NewLifeMinistries-NLM.org)

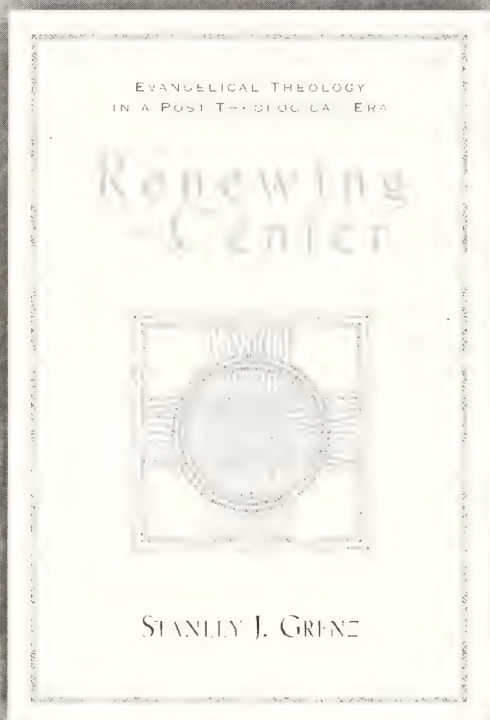
This site of resources and services focuses on evangelism, congregational growth and vitality, and church planting. It includes many online resources and serves as a portal to other Internet sites and web-based articles related to these topics.

**Smaller Churches Network:** [www.ashland.edu/~rwaters/smallchurches.htm](http://www.ashland.edu/~rwaters/smallchurches.htm)

This is a list of resources pertaining to ministry in small churches (averaging 100 or fewer in average worship attendance). It includes an e-mail discussion forum.



## ***Generous Orthodoxy***



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—Gary Dorrien, Kalamazoo College

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Patrick Alexander, *et al*, ed., *The SBL Handbook of Style for Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999. xiv + 280 pp. \$24.95.

This volume is the product of a partnership between the Society of Biblical Literature and the editorial staff of Hendrickson Publishers. Its goal is to provide a standard guide for all matters editorial in the production of a scholarly article or book in the field of Biblical studies (taken quite broadly). If followed conscientiously, this reference work promises to make the process of production easier for authors, copy editors, and proofreaders alike and to bring precision and standardization to the vast amount of literature being produced in Biblical studies.

The book begins with a brief outline of the author's responsibilities from proposal to proofreading and indexing, and then moves into chapters on general stylistic concerns, transliterating various ancient scripts, indexing (including what to capitalize), how to cite just about anything in any language, proper bibliographical format for everything from ancient texts to internet publications (both following the MLA and social-scientific models), and abbreviations for ancient texts (from Philo to Qumran to ostraca) and modern research resources (journals, serials, and reference works). These resources are followed by several lengthy and helpful appendices: a 13-page example of an index giving many examples of how to spell frequently used terms and which to capitalize, a table of Ancient Near Eastern periods and their dates, a table outlining the various Ezra traditions (1-4 Ezra, 1-2 Esdras, Ezra, Nehemiah) and their relationship to each other, the canons of the synagogue and various arms of the Christian Church, a very handy table showing the differences between English OT, Hebrew Bible, and Septuagint versification, a complete bibliography of texts discovered in the Judean Desert, a concordance of Ugaritic texts, a lengthy table of Greek and Latin works and their abbreviations, Hebrew and Greek numerals, and common editing and proofreading marks.

Where this book will help the student of the Bible, early church, or ancient Near East, is in the standardization it promises to bring to works written after 1999, if authors and editors adopt the guide as their standard. No longer will *A.J.*, *Ant.*, *Antt.*, *J.A.*, and the like all be used as abbreviations for Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, nor will Hanukkah stand alongside Chanukkah and other variants. I would strongly recommend this book as a desk reference for every scholar writing in these fields. The student who will be engaging serious study of scholarly works in the field would also find this a useful aid, however, as a guide to the abbreviations of ancient texts (like the various treatises of Plutarch or works of Ambrose) and modern resources (like the plethora of journals), particularly the more obscure. It also offers perhaps the most up-to-date guide to citing sources, including now CD-ROM and various kinds of internet sources. This book could thus also supply a growing need among students writing papers across the seminary curriculum.

David A. deSilva

## Book Reviews

Patrick Durusau, *High Places in Cyberspace: A Guide to Biblical and Religious Studies, Classics, and Archaeological Resources on the Internet*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998). xiii + 302, paper, \$29.95.

In a day when one hears so much about dangerous and unpleasant places on the Internet, it is refreshing to be reminded that it is also a tool for good. This book does this well, and in way that even novice should be able to use it. The first chapter briefly introduces the Internet and how to access it. A fuller treatment is found in Jason Baker's *Christian Cyberspace Companion* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995, reviewed in *ATJ* 28 [1996] 209]. In the second chapter he introduces e-mail, usually the first Internet tool people encounter. He discusses in detail the various kinds of lists and groups which one is able to join, as well as providing a useful guide to 'netiquette,' since people too often forget civility (as well as rational thought and mechanics of spelling and grammar) when they enter what can be the anonymous world of cyberspace. Scholars and pastors will find this kind of service useful for dialogue and keeping abreast of developments in numerous areas of study and service.

Chapter 3 provides a (too) brief, 2 page introduction to world wide web browsers (mainly Netscape and Internet Explorer), and chapter 4 introduces FTP (file transfer protocol). The latter goes beyond the novice, as does the following chapter on telnet, but both aspects of the Internet will repay exploration by those who delve a bit deeper into computer use.

The most valuable section of the book is a list of 'Internet resources for biblical and religious studies, archaeology and classics.' This includes information on where and how to join 121 e-mail discussion lists on numerous topics, during which he refers to an even more comprehensive source at: <http://info.ox.ac.uk/ctitext/theology/email.html>, which is 'A Shortlist of Email Forums (sic) for Theologians. He also provides a 183 page alphabetical directory of Web addresses for resources ranging from 'A-Z of Jewish & Israel Related Resources' through 'Inscriptions from the Land of Israel' to 'Chogyen Zen,' along with a brief description of each. It is these resources, their constant burgeoning as well as their disappearance from the Web, which necessitated a new edition of the book only 2 years after it first appeared. It also illustrates the inability of print media to handle this kind of project adequately, since it is dated long before it reaches publication. The author promises updates at <http://shemesh.scholar.emory.edu/scripts/highplaces.html>. In spite of a notice at that location that an update would be available by 12/18/98, it was not found as of 7/9/99. A random test (of the three sites mentioned above), the first and last were no longer available.

Searching for resources such as these is part of the excitement of using the Internet, and Durusau has a chapter on 'searching for Internet resources' where he introduces some of the major search engines and explains how to most effectively use them. He closes his material with a chapter on 'creating a web resource' in which he addresses foundational questions such what you want to accomplish, as well as the different formats which are available. He also provides reference addresses to assist web resource creators. The book closes with an alphabetic index of the various sites discussed.

Computers are becoming more and more commonplace in research and in everyday life. This will help those interested in the Bible and related areas to be able to



more usefully use it for study and for ministry. Academic as well as many church libraries would find this an appropriate addition to their collection. David W. Baker

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Thomas Brisco, gen. ed., *Holman Bible Atlas: A Complete Guide to the Expansive Geography of Biblical History*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1998. 298 pp. \$39.99.

An attractively produced volume, this *Atlas* presents an overview of life in the fertile crescent, lays out the history and geography of both the Old Testament period (including a fine introduction to Intertestamental history) and New Testament period (through the second Jewish revolt), closing with helpful indices, glossary, and bibliography. The text is well-written and is lavishly complemented by photographs, artists' reconstructions of sites, chronological tables, and maps. It is comparable to, though less detailed than, the *Harper Atlas of the Bible*, which also features a running history and feature articles on relevant topics. If one is looking merely for a collection of maps and some well-chosen photographs and site reconstructions, one would do better to consult the *Hammond Atlas of the Bible Lands* (which is relatively slim and inexpensive). If, however, one wants a more thorough exposure to the history and culture that brings the maps and illustrations to life, the *Holman Bible Atlas* would be a fine choice (though perhaps still a second choice to the *Harper Atlas of the Bible*). David A. deSilva

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John R. Kohlenberger III and James A. Swanson, *The Hebrew English Concordance to the Old Testament with the New International Version*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998. xvi + 2192 pp., \$99.00.

Up to now, students who desired a Hebrew-English concordance which include some of the context of the relevant word had only one option, *The Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament*, by George V. Wigram. This was based on the KJV and first published in 1843. A new lexicon has thus been desideratum for some time, and the need has been well filled by the work under review.

The volume starts with an introduction as to its use. Then the concordance proper presents each word in alphabetical order, with separate sections for Hebrew and Aramaic. The entries consist of: the word's number as assigned by Goodrick/Kohlenberger (G/K; a system which updates and corrects that used in Strong's concordance), the Hebrew of the word and its transliteration into Roman characters, an identification of its part of speech, the frequency of use of the word with numbers in brackets for its occurrence first in *BHS* and second in the NIV, another bracketed reference following a square root sign to other semantically related words using the G/K number(s), a listing in descending frequency order of the various NIV translations of the word, and a list of verses in which the word is used with its context. The latter are in Protestant canonical order and include the verse reference, and a 5-10 word context of the relevant word which is itself printed in bold.

Most words have a complete entry apart from the most common forms such as the copula 'and' and various prepositions, particles, adverbs and conjunctions. These have

a listing in the concordance proper with a list of the various NIV translations and the number of times each of these occur. More information is given on most of these in a following "Select Index" where actual verse references, without context. Several forms, e.g. the copula, the definite article, pronominal suffixes, are not so indexed.

Following this there is an "NIV English-Hebrew & Aramaic Index" listed in alphabetical order following a listing of the occurrence of the numerals. Each entry has the NIV word, frequency of it in brackets, G/K number, Hebrew transliteration and Hebrew frequency, allowing one to move from NIV to Hebrew. There follows "A Concise Hebrew-English Dictionary" (and then one for Aramaic) with each entry including the Hebrew form, its transliteration, a brief gloss, and reference information on where the word is referred to in other lexica. Verbs also are glossed as to their verbal stem (each of which is abbreviated in a non-standard and opaque manner).

The tool will be of great use to students of the Hebrew Bible. Those who can would still, however, be better served in using A. Even-Shoshan's *A New Concordance of the Bible*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990), since there all uses of each discrete form grammatical of the word is listed, making it possible to discover such things as verbal parallels more readily. The volume should be in all theological libraries, and most pastors and students will find use for it in their own study.

David W. Baker

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Takamitsu Muraoka, *Hebrew/Aramaic Index to the Septuagint*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1998. 160 pp. \$19.99.

With the diligent assistance of his wife, Muraoka has prepared an expanded and corrected version of the "Hebrew Index" of Hatch and Redpath's *Concordance to the Septuagint*. The original index provided a key to the page and column numbers in the massive 1500-page *Concordance* where one could find the Greek equivalents to Hebrew terms. Muraoka now provides in a glance what those Greek equivalents are (so that one no longer has to thumb through the whole concordance) and has provided emendations of many kinds to the original. His work is best presented by example (the Hebrew and Greek appear in their proper characters in the actual books discussed). The original entry in Hatch and Redpath's Index might have simply read:

hn 155b, 289 c, 451a, 538c, 583c, 1455a, 177c, 178a, 195a.

Muraoka's entry reads:

hn

*areskeia* 155b

*#dektos* 289c (Pr. 22.11)

*Eleos, elaios* 451a

*#epicharēs* 538c (Na. 3.4)

[*epicharis* 538c] → *epicharēs*

*eulalos* 177c

*eumorphos* 178a

*eucharistos* 583c

*charis* 14551, 195a (+ Si. 3.18; 7.33; 26.15)

The reader can thus learn at a glance the semantic range of Hebrew *jn* in Septuagint Greek. Moreover, Muraoka has interacted critically with Hatch and Redpath. In the example, Muraoka has added *dektos* and *epicharēs* to Hatch and Redpath's list, suggested that *epicharis* was, in fact, a mistake in Hatch and Redpath, and added several instances where Septuagint occurrences of a word need to be added to the occurrences listed in Hatch and Redpath (e.g., the additional verses of Ben Sira noted in the parentheses above).

Obviously, this is a reference work for those working in lexicography and, in particular, textual criticism of the Hebrew Scriptures (e.g., reconstructing the Hebrew *Vorlage* of Septuagint readings). A reverse index (indicating the range of Hebrew words that could be represented by a single Greek word), while greatly lengthening the volume, would have made it a more complete aid, particularly helpful for mapping out the ways in which Greek and Hebrew semantic ranges overlap (as well as for textual reconstructions from the Septuagint).

David A. deSilva

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Page H. Kelley, Daniel S. Mynatt, Timothy G. Crawford, *The Masorah of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia: Introduction and Annotated Glossary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. xiv + 241 pp., paper, \$26.00.

The authors and Eerdmans have provided a valuable tool for intermediate and advanced students of Hebrew. As soon as a student encounters the Hebrew text in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (*BHS*), the standard text of the Old Testament, they see notes and signs which they have never encountered before in their study of the Hebrew language. This volume seeks to demystify some of these.

The Masoretes were the scribes who transmitted and interpreted the biblical text during the first millennium of this era. They left their notes which are included in the margins, and in some cases within the body, of what is now the *BHS*. The authors introduce them and their work, and show how to understand and use these notes.

The first chapter discusses what the Masorah is, why it is important for study, and basic skills for doing so. The second gives the history of the Masorah and various of its traditions. Then follows a discussion of the 'proto-masoretic text,' irregularities in the consonantal text which the scribes noted and interpreted. A detailed discussion on working with the notes follows, and then 14 samples are introduced, moving from deductive to inductive study. The fifth and longest (125 pages) chapter is the glossary in which masoretic terms are translated, explained and exemplified. The book closes with an exhaustive, 24 page bibliography, and a valuable index of scripture passages discussed.

The layout of the volume is excellent, and its larger than regular size allows good sized type and clear fonts, making it a pleasure to use. The volume does not cover accents or the more modern text critical issues raised in the second of the *BHS* critical apparatus, since that is beyond its scope. Students will find it very helpful in understanding the masoretic notes, and through them gain an insight into very early tradition of biblical interpretation. A must for all theological libraries, and for students of Scripture who desire to go beyond the introductory level of language competence.

David W. Baker



David W. Baker and Bill T. Arnold, *The Face of Old Testament Studies: A Survey of Contemporary Approaches*. Baker/Apollos, 1999, 512 pages.

When I began to study theology in 1961, there weren't many books on the Old Testament. Of the ones that existed, my copy of H. H. Rowley's *The Old Testament and Modern Study* looks as if it was the most used. It was our great standby for a predigested survey of the Old Testament scholarship of the day.

*The Face of Old Testament Studies* presents itself as a work along the lines of *The Old Testament and Modern Study*, though it then draws attention to a distinctive feature, that it makes a point of noting the contributions of conservative scholars. Indeed, its remarkable achievement is that it is written by a team who all belong (or could all belong) to groups such as the Evangelical Theological Society or the Tyndale Fellowship. In the 1950s there were no evangelical Old Testament scholars contributing to works such as *The Old Testament and Modern Study*. It is a noteworthy fact that at the end of the millennium there can be a whole volume of them.

In some cases they give us an advocacy of their own line (e.g., M. R. Adamthwaite on the occupation of Palestine or H. G. M. Williamson on the Second Temple period). In others they give us a survey of issues and approaches that leaves the answers more open (e.g., G. J. Wenham on the Pentateuch or K. L. Younger on early Israel - rather a different implicit stance from Adamthwaite's, too). Either way, we get an illuminating take on the issues as they have argued over the past thirty years, which will help the hard-pressed professor get his or her mind round current debate.

One of the editors comments that "knowledge in biblical studies is increasing exponentially, as it is in every field of knowledge". Yet the knowledge that increases is of a rather Pickwickian kind, for the authors make clear that much of the contemporary study that they chronicle involves the re-opening of questions that thirty years ago people thought were resolved, and the reconsidering of answers that were then rejected. In a real sense we "know" less than we knew thirty or forty years ago, about how the Pentateuch came to be written, or about the date of the exodus, or about how Israel became Israel in Palestine. This volume demonstrates that growth in knowledge over the past thirty years (e.g., through archeological discoveries) has increased unclarity and uncertainty rather than facilitating steps forward in understanding.

Its authors apparently think that in due course we will know the answers to questions such as the ones I have mentioned. In some cases they are convinced of the right answers and urge others to recognize them. But the sobering implication of the theorizing that they study is that we never will know and never will agree. The problem is not merely that faith-presuppositions affect people's work, though the volume rightly notes that they do. Rather, the "problem" is that the study of the past thirty years has made it more clear that in the Old Testament, God has given us a book whose origins we cannot trace and whose correlation with middle-eastern history we cannot discover. The implication of this symposium is that the Old Testament does not deliver the kind of information that will ever enable us to answer those questions. As evangelicals we need to think about the implications of that fact. It does not imply any doubt on whether the Old Testament is God's Word. It does have implications for what might be God's

concerns in giving it to us and for what its interpretation involves, for what the right questions are.

The volume makes another aspect of its distinctive stance clear with an opening disavowal of some contemporary approaches to the Old Testament that seem to be "presuppositionally wrong-headed". Abandon post-modernism and post-structuralism all ye who enter here. As I have implied already, in this disavowal the volume makes clear that its main focus is a survey of the state of the art on the same approaches to the Old Testament that interested Rowley and Company. Historical study provides the dominant framework for looking at the Old Testament. Among the approaches to Old Testament study that do not count as "contemporary" are thus liberation interpretation, African-American interpretation, and feminist interpretation, which receive little mention compared with their great prominence in current scholarly work.

Most oddly, ethics is "beyond the purview of this volume". One wonders why, especially when evangelicals such as C. J. H. Wright have made key contributions in that area. To make an overlapping point, there is little on the content of the codes in the Pentateuch or the priorities of the Prophets. The volume's focus on history indicates a resolutely modern agenda. This is so despite Tremper Longman's comment, in a chapter on literary approaches to the Old Testament that does take up questions that were not being asked thirty years ago, that there is a need for a post-modern critique of modernism. Funny that evangelicals should have become the guardians of the historical-critical agenda.

The blurb offers the commendations of Patrick Miller, Walter Brueggemann, Desmond Alexander, Willem VanGemeren, and Daniel Block, which shows that I must be wrong in the qualifications to my admiration for this impressive symposium.

John Goldingay, Fuller Theological Seminary

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Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997, xxi + 777 pp.

This is a major work, by a leading scholar, written throughout with lucidity and passion. In an obvious sense, it sums up much that Brueggemann has been speaking and writing about in recent years. Interestingly, however, it does not take the form that we expected from some of Brueggemann's preliminary essays, which suggests that Brueggemann's preliminary essays, which suggests that Brueggemann's thinking is still developing (a point which both admirers and detractors need to bear in mind).

The main body of the work is framed by a retrospect and prospect about the discipline of Old Testament Theology, which shows many an incisive and provocative insight. One primary feature, here and throughout the work, is a passionate resistance to what Brueggemann sees as a "too easy" Christian approach to the biblical text, in which interpreters are inclined to know (and prejudge) the answers before they have even formulated the right questions. On the one hand, he resists recurrent Christian attempts to downgrade the value and significance of the Old Testament by categorizing it as "law" or "promise," for Christians regularly misconceive the nature of *torah* and of Israel's cult, and ignore or downplay the disputatiousness and questioning of God that is so important within Israel's faith. "Old Testament theology must live with that

pluralistic practice of dispute and compromise, so that the texts cannot be arranged in any single or unilateral pattern. It is the process of dispute and compromise itself that constitutes Israel's mode of theological testimony" (p. 710). On the other hand, he insists that Christians must recognize the extent of common ground and task which they share with Jews, and so take with full theological seriousness the nature of Israel's witness to God as scripture for Jews independently of Christ. "If we are to interpret the Old Testament in our circumstance, it is clear that Jewish faith and an actual Jewish community must be on the horizon of Christians" (p. 734).

While these emphases are familiar in other contemporary O.T. scholarship, Brueggemann firmly roots them in a postmodern context in which the arrogant claims of Christian "hegemony" (as Brueggemann understands classic Christian theology) must become more humble and fully recognize their position as one claim among others, with no special privilege. Brueggemann gives further sharpness to his position by a consistent emphasis upon rhetoric as foundational to his theology; that is, Israel's language about God, which Brueggemann suggestively construes in terms of *testimony* (and counter-testimony), cannot be grounded either in appeals to Israel's history (a move both similar and dissimilar to that of von Rad) or in appeals to ontology (as is characteristic of classic, ecclesial theology). On the one hand, the "fideistic" nature of Brueggemann's position is clear, as in his comments on Genesis 22:16-18: "Everything about Israel's life in the world depends on these words having been uttered by Yahweh. Of course, beyond Israel's insistence, we have no evidence that Yahweh has uttered these words. The testimony of the Bible would have us take Israel's word as certification that these promises have indeed been uttered with ensuring power and significance. Beyond such testimony, Israel can provide no warrants for the claim, and certainly historical research cannot touch the issue" (p. 165f). On the other hand, the legitimate use of the language implies particular kinds of human living: "Yahweh, as given in Israel's testimony, never comes 'alone' but is always Yahweh-in-relation" (p. 409); "the drama of brokenness and restoration, which has Yahweh as its key agent, features *generosity*, *candor* in brokenness, and resilient *hope*, the markings of a viable life" (p. 562); and, in short, "justice as the core focus of Yahweh's life in the world and Israel's life with Yahweh" (p. 735). Thus Brueggemann sees the use of Israel's testimony to God as inseparable from the practice of justice; here, and not in history or ontology, is that which grounds testimony in reality.

The exposition of the Old Testament is set out under four main headings: 1) Testimony, i.e., Israel's primary affirmations about God, set out in relation initially to those verbs of which Yahweh is subject, though also with particular focus on the adjectives of Exodus 34:6-7. Brueggemann's presentation here breaks fresh ground; though the gain of seeing the "grammar" of Israel's language about God needs to be set against the fact that the narratives and poems, within which this grammar is set, often receive limited attention as narratives and poems. 2) Counter-Testimony, i.e., those passages where Israel recognizes the hidden, ambiguous and difficult character of God. 3) Unsolicited Testimony, where fresh ground is broken in discussion of the nations as Yahweh's partner (though with no reference to the basic Hebrew concept of "fear of God," which is expected of the nations as much as of Israel). 4) Embodied Testimony, where torah, king, prophet, cult and sage are considered as mediations of Israel's life with God. This overall structure works reasonably well, though it is surprising only to



encounter Election under Unsolicited Testimony, and some of the material in section 4 lacks the freshness of some of the other sections. As always with Brueggemann, there is extensive bibliography, much of it beyond the specialized sphere of Old Testament studies (though he does not always engage with the works cited; for example, he continues to treat Christian "supersessionism" towards the Old Testament and Jews as a negative and undifferentiated phenomenon [e.g., pp 330, 449, 734f]; my *The Old Testament of the Old Testament*, which tries to break new ground is noted [pp. 22, 414] but its arguments are ignored).

Brueggemann situates Old Testament Theology unambiguously within a postliberal context (p. 86). He is clear about the need for rooting such theology in a "community that is unembarrassed about commitment that, in the parience of 'objective rationality', may be categorized as bias or ideology" (p. 743), and that such an undertaking "is not in principle a second-rate or secondhand enterprise, but it can be a serious intellectual and moral undertaking that is not enthralled to a Cartesian attempt to think without body" (p. 744). There is a clarion call to the integration of Old Testament study and life which goes way beyond the standard fare of Old Testament Theologies, and which opens us vistas vital to the future of theological study of the Old Testament.

This is therefore a work of biblical study which needs to be heeded. There will be many, not least in the USA, whose theological and political positions are not those of Brueggemann. All the more important, then, to engage with the theological and moral issues Brueggemann raises with the seriousness which they require, and to allow Brueggemann's work to help move biblical interpretation into fresh categories of understanding which can help us escape from some of the old labels and trenches.

Of the many possible issues for further discussion, I select one, that is Brueggemann's detachment of Old Testament language about God not only from history but also from ontology (and the classic Christian theology which Brueggemann sees as prepossessed with ontology, reductionism and control). He is clear that is theology means "an attempt to exposit the theological perspectives and claims of the [sc. OT] text itself, in all its odd particularity, without any attempt to accommodate to a larger rationality, either of modernity or of classical Christianity" (p. 86). This means that classic Christian concerns about the "reality" of God are misplaced: "I insist that it is characteristic of the Old Testament, and characteristically Jewish, that God is given to us (and exists as God 'exists') only by the dangerous practice of rhetoric. Therefore in doing Old Testament theology we must be careful not to import essentialist claims that are not authorized by this particular and peculiar rhetoric. *I shall insist, as consistently as I can, that the God of Old Testament theology as such lives in, with, and under the rhetorical enterprise of the text, and nowhere else and in no other way*" (p. 66). So when, for example, we are told that the God of the Old Testament (a character within Israel's rhetoric, not an ontological reality) is "sometimes unreliable and notoriously cunning" (p. 132), needs to be "talked into something Yahweh had not yet entertained or imagined or intended" (p. 439), and displays "negligence" and "mean-spirited irascibility" (p. 560), this is not an occasion for the misplaced Christian question, "But how does this relate to the God in whom I trust?", but an occasion to celebrate the denseness and daring of Israel's testimony and to resist reductive attempts to resist or explain away such language.

At the risk of oversimplifying, it seems to me that there are two basic options in Old Testament Theology. One is to hold that although we have no access to God except via the language of scripture and appropriate ways of living, such language and living are media of engagement with a reality beyond themselves (a "classic" position). The other is to hold that the language and living themselves constitute the reality of God, and that there is no "further reality" beyond them (a "postmodern" position). Brueggemann, as far as I can see (unless I misunderstand him), has opted for the latter, and in so doing has surrendered something that Jews and Christians alike down the ages (*mutatis mutandis*) have believed to be integral to their faiths. For it is only when you hold to the former position that classic theology can be recognized for what it truly is, namely the disciplining and regulating of testimony to God so that it may be faithful and true, rather than idolatrous and self-serving. For the Christian this means engagement with the truth of God in Jesus Christ, for here the truth of God and humanity is known supremely. The fact that Brueggemann can so easily and sweepingly dismiss classic Christian theology in favor of a rather easy appeal to contemporary postliberal theologians, suggests a failure to grasp Christian theology's true significance. Do not Eastern Orthodox theologians, for whom a critique of facile ontology is basic to their apophatic Trinitarianism, have something to teach us? Are Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin and Barth really such men of straw? (I am sure that Brueggemann does not think so, but his book gives the impression.)

Towards the end of the book Brueggemann restates his concern to free Old Testament Theology from being endlessly seduced "by the ancient Hellenistic lust for Being, for establishing ontological reference behind the text. Thus, for example, Brevard Childs reaches for 'the Real'. Perhaps such thinking is inevitable, given our Hellenistic, philosophical inheritance. The truth of the matter, as far as Israel is concerned, is that if one believes the testimony, one is near to reality. And if not, one is not near reality, for the Real is indeed uttered. Such a construal will not satisfy modernist historicism nor the philosophically minded... It may well be that I have not given correct nuance to these matters because I lack knowledge in the appropriate adjunct disciplines. I have no doubt, nonetheless, that Old Testament theology in the future must do its work in reliance on the lean evidence of utterance" (p. 714).

Three comments on this. First, Brueggemann misrepresents Childs, who is simply rearticulating the classic Jewish and Christian concern to speak of God via the biblical text, on the historic/classic/orthodox assumption that there is more to God than biblical religious language, ancient history, and contemporary human actions. Secondly, Brueggemann sees only history and philosophy as the prime disciplines which might be offended (and about which he confesses that he may be insufficiently informed), with no sense that theology itself might be a discipline which could take exception to his dismissals of history and ontology. Thirdly, it is all very well to say that "if one believes the testimony, one is near to reality." But how is one to assess testimonies which conflict? This is the classic issue of truth in relation to language about God that the Old Testament itself raises in the context of true and false prophecy. Yet about this Brueggemann has little to say, and what he does say is disappointing. When discussing divine calling of prophets (which remains a kind of template within Christian faith today), he can only say that these "make a claim of authority that is impossible to verify. That is, all of these claims and uses are reports of a quite personal, subjective

experience. No objective evidence can be given that one has been in the divine council... No verification of a call experience is possible" (p. 631). At the very place where one needs the language and insights of moral and spiritual discernment - the perennial primary form of theological hermeneutics - Brueggemann, who is usually so critical of Enlightenment rationality, himself lapses into the language of unreconstructed positivism, with its neat dichotomy between the "objective" (accessible, public, discussable) and "subjective" (inaccessible, private, non-discussable), whereby encounter with God (and truthful speaking for God) is relegated to the insignificance of the latter. Of course, Brueggemann's major emphasis on justic and community moves in the opposite direction. But I suspect that something rather important has not yet been fully thought through.

To sum up, Brueggemann is rightly trying to relocate Old Testament Theology within a context that is more truly theological. Yet the book is, in my judgement, insufficiently rooted in the disciplines of theology to be fully persuasive. Why a postliberal Christian theologian who wishes to respect the integrity of the Old Testament and of Jewish faith should thereby feel obligated (in effect) to marginalize Jesus Christ in his theological work in a manner rather similar to that of a liberal historian is, to me at least, puzzling. And although one could do far worse than an account of God rooted in compassionate and just contemporary communities, many a believer may still feel shortchanged. Indeed, and ironically, the very reductionism with reference to God, to which Brueggemann is so opposed, will be felt by many to characterize his own account of God which, by the dismissal of history and ontology, is itself thereby reduced.

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F. Crüsemann, *The Torah: Theology and Social History of Old Testament Law*, trans. A.W. Mahnke (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), hbk., xvi + 460 pp., ISBN 0-8006-2856-X. Translation of German original, *Die Tora: Theologie und Sozialgeschichte des alttestamentlichen Gesetzes* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1992).

Crüsemann's work is certainly one of the most significant books to have been written on OT law in recent years. Its importance derives above all from the attempt to integrate historical, social, literary and theological elements into a single overall perspective on Torah. Crüsemann's primary aim is the reinstatement of law within Christian theology, since in his view the Torah transmits 'the one will of the one God, creator of all humanity, to a single people - his Israel' (p. 3). This unitary approach is in conflict with the usual eclectic and arbitrary use of Torah by Christians, as exemplified by the common classification into civil, ceremonial and moral law, or the assumption that the Ten Commandments should be elevated above all other forms of law. These kinds of analyses all have the effect of treating parts, sometime large parts, of the Torah as of secondary value.

While Crüsemann's effort at integration is highly laudable, in reality most of the book is taken up with a detailed analysis of the social and historical developments of the Pentateuchal law collections. Only in the final chapter does he return at any length to the theological issues. Though the Torah's most distinctive features are attributed to the theological reflections of the deuteronomic movement (cf. Dt. 6-11), the Torah's



ultimate unity is associated with the development of monotheistic ideas in the post-exilic period. As Israel came to see all of life as subject to Yahweh's jurisdiction, so the law became correspondingly inclusive. 'The identity of the biblical God is dependent upon the connection with his Torah' (p. 366). Historically, this climax was reached towards the end of the Persian period. It was influenced by Ezra's integration of state and religious law and Nehemiah's combination of laws from the priestly and deuteronomic collections and the Book of the Covenant (Neh. 10). An interesting analogy to the Pentateuch's location of contradictory law collections alongside one other is found in Xerxes' edict overriding but not annulling Haman's original edict announcing the destruction of the Jews (Est. 8). Like the laws of the Medes and Persians, the Pentateuchal laws could not be changed.

The chronological development of the major law collections is presented in the usual order of the Book of the Covenant, Deuteronomy, and the Priestly Writing. Special attention is also given to the references to law in the pre-exilic prophetic literature, the role of the Sinai laws and of Moses. The covenantal emphasis of the Sinai material is regarded as one of the latest elements in the Pentateuch. Crüsemann regards Sinai as an utopian ideal independent of royal and cultic influence, though he recognises that this 'depends on a fictional place in an invented past' (p. 57). Moses is also viewed non-historically. He represents the authority of law, though he cannot be identified with any particular civil or religious authority such as the monarchy or Ezra. He is a figure of tradition who also represents the freedom and autonomy of God's law in contrast to all other forms of law in Israel.

It is not possible in this brief summary to give more than the merest indication of the possible strengths and weaknesses of this volume. Its greatest potential value lies in the theological emphasis that the Torah can be understood in terms of its unity. Crüsemann's comments on the significance of the whole Torah for Christian theology and ethics are of particular importance. On the other hand, his attempts to wrestle with the variety of the Pentateuchal law collections makes some of his historical conclusions much more questionable. For example, why could the utopian flavour of the Sinai laws not indicate that they belong to the beginning of the process of the development of law rather than the end? Though this volume does not perhaps quite fulfil the author's hope of providing a secure basis for using the Old Testament in discussions about ethics or the relationship between Christianity and Judaism, it will certainly make a significant contribution to such debates.

Martin J. Selman

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Donald E. Gowan. *Theology of the Prophetic Books: The Death and Resurrection of Israel*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998. Paperback, 250pp. \$24.95.

Interpretation of a corpus so varied and complex as the writing prophets of the Hebrew Bible is a daunting task. In *The Death and Resurrection of Israel* Gowan offers a lens which he believes will lend clarity to the prophets' comprehensive message. He adopts a canon critical approach, leaving to others the involved questions of redaction.

A well-qualified and winsome scholar from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, the author adopts the term "death" to refer to Israel's exile and consequent loss of political identity, the result of her failure to distinctively represent the character of God among

surrounding nations (pp. 9-10). "Resurrection," then, refers to the nation of Israel's restoration as projected by the prophets.

Of particular value in this synthetic work is the author's attention to historic background for each prophet. While some will differ in issues of date, Gowan makes every attempt to draw on what we know of Israel's story to illuminate the prophetic messages.

As to application of the death / resurrection interpretive lens, certain of Gowan's conclusions are predictable (such as the fact that as one leaves 8<sup>th</sup> century texts and moves into exilic and post-exilic material the theme of restoration increases in prominence). At times the thesis that early prophets concentrated on death / judgment seems to overlook invitations to repentance (e.g., Hos. 6).

Jonah, with no apparent message for the future of the Israelite nation, poses a bit of a problem for the death / resurrection interpretation. While one can heartily concur that the book's "deeper theme is the character of God" (p. 141), to concentrate on Jonah as a reflection on the apparent "shift from judgment to promise that occurred during the exilic period" would seem unduly to blunt the book's incisive message (p. 138). Must we not also (and primarily) become impacted by the depth to which God would feel the loss of gentiles represented by judgment-threatened Ninevites?

In conclusion, while the exile / restoration lens certainly offers a comprehensive view encompassing much prophetic material, Gowan's work unfortunately left me unsatisfied, neither significantly challenged nor enriched in my grasp of this vital corpus.

Paul Overland

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J.H. Walton & V.H. Matthews, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Genesis – Deuteronomy* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1997). 280pp. + 4 maps. (hbk.)

The Bible Background Commentary is a different kind of Bible commentary. Rather than helping readers to understand the actual text of Scripture, its aim is to explain the background to the text. For example, this volume on Genesis to Deuteronomy volume discusses where the garden of Eden might have been, why the Israelites practised animal sacrifice, or whether the command to take 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth' is as cruel and extreme as is often claimed. In the light of this, it is perhaps questionable whether it should be called a commentary at all in the usual sense of the word. In reality it is more of a reference work, to be consulted on points of interest or in order to find out more information about 'the world behind the text'.

The Commentary contains various kinds of notes. Where possible, explanations are provided about individual people, places and customs, though as in the case of the kings in Gen. 14, it is often necessary to acknowledge that we still know comparatively little about them. Otherwise, comment is restricted either to general cultural background, or to explaining one biblical passage on the basis of others. The patriarchs' practice of passing off their wives as their sisters, for example, is described in terms of a literary motif, while Sarah's attractiveness at the age of 65 is dealt with by way of a linguistic comment. In other words, the background is as likely to be innerbiblical as extrabiblical, or sometimes is simply subject to the best suggestions of the commentators.

The Commentary will be most useful to those who are consciously looking for background information and who are aware of the self-imposed limitations of the series, but some words of caution are appropriate. The fact that the Commentary is designed for so-called laypeople and so contains no footnotes or precise references means that readers basically have to take the authors' word for what they say. However, some of the comments are quite demanding, especially those including unfamiliar names and words from ancient languages, and will be difficult for the intended readership to evaluate. The consciously evangelical nature of this production also raises some questions, even for those who are basically in sympathy with the authors' presuppositions. Assumptions such as a fifteenth century B.C. date for the exodus or the identification of Azazel in the Day of Atonement rituals with a demon will not be shared by all informed readers and could be misleading to others.

A further frustration is that although we are told that the Pentateuch's perspective often differs from the cultural perspective of the ancient Near East, we are given little if any guidance as to how to appreciate those differences. Deuteronomy for example is described as a covenant document rather like an ancient treaty, but without any indication that the nature of the covenant in Deuteronomy might differ significantly from the ideological world of ancient international law. Underlying this problem is a lack of any discussion about either the nature or content of the books of the Pentateuch. Without such guidance, it is almost impossible for the kind of uninformed reader for whom the book is intended to set the cultural notes in a proper context. So while the authors' aim is very laudable, a less sharp distinction between Bible background and Bible text would have assisted in giving a clearer understanding of the background.

Martin J. Selman

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William H. C. Propp, *Exodus 1-18*, Anchor Bible 2. New York: Doubleday, 1999. xl + 680 pp. hardback, \$44.95.

Jack M. Sasson, *Jonah*, Anchor Bible 24B. New York: Doubleday, 1990. xvi + 368 pp., hardback, \$32.50.

Adele Berlin, *Zephaniah*, Anchor Bible 25A. New York: Doubleday, 1994. xxi + 165 pp., hardback, \$29.00.

Andrew Hill, *Malachi*, Anchor Bible 25D. New York: Doubleday, 1998. xliii + 436 pp., hardback, \$37.95.

Appearance of volumes in this well-known series continues at a steady pace. Its eclectic nature is shown by diversity of gender and theological approach, Hill being an Evangelical teaching at Wheaton College, Berlin is a Jewish scholars teaching at the University of Maryland, (Propp teaches at the University of California, San Diego and Sasson at the University of Carolina at Chapel Hill. The format of introduction, commentator's translation, philological and exegetical notes on the translation, and comment on historical and literary matters is familiar from earlier volumes of the series.

Berlin's expertise is in literary analysis of texts, so she takes a special interest in



Zephaniah's rhetoric, and in seeing the unity rather than any suggested fragmentation of the text. She states "*viewing it [Zeph 2:5-15, but this could also refer to the entire book] as a whole yields an interpretation much more interesting and compelling than viewing it as a collection of separate parts [italics hers]*" (p. 23). This is a refreshing reminder of a groundswell of current opinion which is running counter to the traditional, atomistic approach which would perform an autopsy on living texts, leaving them lifeless and unpreachable.

It is intriguing how such an approach as espoused by Berlin can reach conservative conclusions regarding such things as authorship and historical backgrounds for other than traditionally conservative reasons. For example, while a conservative would date the prophecies to the time of Josiah since it is so stated in the book's superscription, Berlin asks, "Why was the period of Josiah chosen as the setting for Zephaniah?...What did the Josianic period represent to a later generation?" Conservatives would get upset at the first question, stating that the period was chosen only by God, not by some human writer as an artificial place to place the prophetic oracles. This would be likely to have them not pose the second question, which is a vital one since the prophecy is not recorded for the original audience, who would have heard the messages in person, but for later generations who would take it as Scripture. This kind of question is canonically very significant.

Sasson is an Assyriologist, and his interest in ancient Near Eastern background material does come through in his coverage. More evident are elements of post-biblical usage and interpretation of Jonah, for example, which he uses quotes at the head of each section from elsewhere in the OT, the apocrypha, NT and rabbinic writings, and from later writers and thinkers such as the Quran, John Donne, John Calvin, Herman Melville, Aldous Huxley, and even Paul Simon. In his discussion of literary and linguistic forms, Sasson also quotes liberally from other similar passages in the OT, so presenting a veritable 'Bible study.' Most of his linguistic discussion is based simply on a transliterated Hebrew text, however, so the lay-person will miss out on much of the discussion, unlike the more readily accessible Berlin text. He concludes with an interesting section on 'Interpretations' where he looks at 'Jonah as History or Fiction' and 'Narrative Art and Literary Typology in Jonah.'

Hill has special interest in linguistic, literary and historical questions. His book goes in much more depth than those mentioned above, and he includes indexes on intertextuality (places where there is reliance between Malachi and other scriptural passages) and vocabulary richness in Malachi (words and phrases unique to the book, of which there are a good number). A bibliography of some 35 pages, as well as a glossary, maps, charts, photos and illustrations keep the interest of the reader in mind. Hill also has his wider reading constituency in mind in that he does not stay only with the OT text, but also shows its use in the NT as well as in liturgy among Jews, Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox. Following a lengthy introduction, in which he helpfully places the book in canon, history, and literature, he provides useful comment on Hebrew forms found in the text, using transliteration but not always a translation. Readers with some knowledge would find the volume of most use, though those without this can also find much of use.

Propp's volume has even more of a bibliography, almost 50 pages, though a briefer introduction than Hill. He reflects his view of the composition of Exodus

(following the Documentary Hypothesis), by putting the verses he attributes to the Priestly source in bold type. He also has an interesting feature which he identifies as 'speculation' for his more personal interpretations. An interesting one on 1:22-2:10 shows the author's view of the historicity of the Mosaic ark story. He writes: "Despite my overall skepticism, it is barely possible that the unusual motif of adoption by a princess dimly reflects actual events" (p. 158).

Propp's commentary proper uses abundant internal cross-referencing to its various sections (textual notes, source analysis, redaction analysis, notes, and comment) so repetition can be kept to a minimum. Page cross-references would be helpful here, and it particularly annoying in this volume when cross-reference is made to an appendix which will not appear until the work is finished in volume 2. This volume should not, therefore, be seen as being completely self-standing.

These volumes, as in fact the entire series, must be in any serious theological library, and pastor and teacher will benefit from them on their shelves as well. As for any commentary, however, I recommend that the perspective purchaser use a copy from the library for a time. This will allow them to ascertain whether any particular volume well suits his or her individual needs.

David W. Baker

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Erhard S. Gerstenberger, *Leviticus: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996, translated from a German original, published 1993.

Frank H. Gorman, Jr., *Divine Presence and Community: A Commentary on the Book of Leviticus*, International Theological Commentary. Grand Rapids/Edinburgh: Eerdmans/Handsel, 1997. xii + 163 pp., paper, \$18.00.

It is interesting to note that Leviticus, probably one of the most neglected of the OT books, is served by two new commentaries in two important series in close proximity. Gerstenberger teaches in Marburg, Germany, and Gorman does so in Bethany, West Virginia. Both function well within the parameters set for their respective series.

The Old Testament Library sets out to present a serious, academic study reflecting mainline scholarship. This volume is a worthy addition to the series, and follows its traditional format. There is a 19 page introduction which discusses topics such as "cult and life," authorship (input from the Jews in dispersion, not just the Jerusalem priesthood, and in the main associated with the post-exilic period), and a brief excursus on the "Holiness Code" (which he views as a "wishful phantom." He then provides a commentary on the book in canonical order, and concludes with a very brief topical index. No author or citation index is provided, greatly reducing accessibility to the work.

The commentary provides interesting and useful information, including thoughts on use of the textual material in the rest of the OT as well as sociological aspects of the rituals presented. There is little verse-by-verse, detailed commentary provided, rather broader, more thematic brushstrokes. This does keep the volume within reasonable size limits, but will frustrate readers who wish to dig deeper into particular texts. For this they will need to consult Jacob Milgrom's mammoth commentary in the Anchor Bible series, due for completion in 2000.

Gorman's volume is even slighter, as fits the series of which it is a part. Also suggesting an exilic date, he acknowledges much material as coming from an earlier period in Israel's history. He also keeps in mind the wider Pentateuchal context of Leviticus as it works within the context of creation, promise, Exodus and Sinai covenant, a useful reminder when Scripture is too often atomized and decontextualized. In his introduction, Gorman also addresses topics such as ritual enactment, the symbolism of the number seven, and a four page consideration of Christian use of Leviticus.

The volume provides a useful introduction to the book, though again not a detailed commentary. It will challenge and provide insight to the reader, and has a commendable range of interaction with other scripture passages for such a small scope (only 132 pages of commentary proper). Expositors will find useful material in both volumes, though neither of them should be the sole commentary in their library on this neglected book. The two works need to be on all serious academic library shelves.

David W. Baker

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A. Graeme Auld, *Joshua Retold: Synoptic Perspectives*, Old Testament Studies, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998, 179 pp.

This anthology brings together a wide-ranging collection of texts, written over a period of approximately twenty years, which focus on issues related to the literary history of Joshua. Although concerned with a variety of topics and texts, the essays (to degree or another) touch upon two important issues: 1) the relationship between the Greek and Masoretic texts of Joshua and 2) the material common to Joshua and Chronicles and its contribution to understand the editorial processes operative in the production of these books. The essays are grouped into four sections and prefaced by a helpful "orientation" which provides a framework and enables the reader to appreciate connections between them.

The first section comprises five essays collected under the title "Texts." As a whole, the essays demonstrate that careful analysis of textual differences can make a considerable contribution to understanding the literary history of Joshua. Undergirding each is Auld's argument that the Greek version of Joshua represents a shorter and more preferable text than that attested by the Masoretic Text. The argument is introduced in the first essay via a comparison of the Greek and Masoretic versions of the battle at Ai (Joshua 8), the passover and circumcision ceremonies (Josh 5), and divergences in tribal nomenclature and references to the deity. A second essay advances the argument with an exploration of the textual differences in Josh 13 and 14 (with special attention on 14:1-5). The remaining three contributions expand the discussion to engage larger compositional questions, with the lists of levitical cities (Josh 21:1-42) and cities of refuge (Josh 20) as focal points. Arguing against the prior consensus, Auld asserts that 1 Chronicles 6 preserves an earlier form of the former list, one that is itself a "collage" that suggests its own process of growth. The Greek text of Joshua constitutes a middle version between the Chronicler's list and the more expansive and systematic form in Joshua 21. The process and character of expansion is further illustrated in the case of the cities of refuge, which manifests an even more complex editorial process (which



draws from Deuteronomic texts as well as the aforementioned passages in 1 Chronicles and Deuteronomy). The final essay engages various scholarly responses to Auld's conclusions on the lists and nudges the reader to reflect on the historical and exegetical implications of the discussion.

Three short essays comprise the second section, under the heading "Words." As the heading indicates, each has to do with particular terms. The first is a short note wherein the author cautions that identification of obscure place names must be grounded in solid text critical work, with the so-called "Beth-anath" (Josh 15:59) as a case in point. The second and third essays demonstrate how careful study of word usage may give insight into the compositional process and challenge scholarly consensus. The former concludes that the term *kbšh* in Gen 1:28 was likely inserted to effect a connection with the subjugation of the land (cf. Josh 18:1), while the latter argues that the terms *vBf* and *mfh* (both of which are translated "staff" or "tribe") display a semantic development from "authority" to "autonomous group" which is completed only during the post-exilic period.

The third section, "Connections," expands the scope of study to explore relationships between larger blocks of material. It begins with a detailed study of Judges 1 which, Auld argues, constitutes a relatively late composition which draws materials from Joshua and other sources to form a preface for the book. Two essays follow and explore Joshua's relationship to the other books of the so-called Deuteronomistic History and 1-2 Chronicles. The first raises a series of provocative challenges to Noth's hypothesis of a massive, connected narrative, while the second returns to the topic of parallel material in Joshua and Chronicles and, through numerous examples, skillfully argues for the possibility of (at least) mutual influence. The last essay revisits questions about the Deuteronomistic History, this time by engaging Mieke Bal's reading of Judges and reexamining the "Deuteronomistic" character of key texts advanced in support of the hypothesis.

The fifth section, "Interpretations," contains one essay that reviews the history of the interpretation of Joshua up to 1995. A final section, "re-orientation," supplements this last essay with a summary of arguments made in the author's *Joshua, Moses, and the Land* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1980) and a review of recent scholarship. A comprehensive bibliography and a series of indexes complete the volume.

Auld's work is characterized by meticulous attention to the text, tight argumentation, and irenic engagement with scholarship. As such, the essays in this volume represent textual analysis at its best. As a whole, they not only provide models for how such work *should* be done but also demonstrate the larger exegetical gains that accrue from rigorous study. As a compendium of exegetical paradigms, the book will be of particular interest to those seeking a fuller understanding of critical method, while the cumulative weight of the essays will certainly elicit a significant conversation on the larger issues they raise.

L. Daniel Hawk

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Karen H. Jobes, *Esther: The NIV Application Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999.

For those unacquainted with the NIV Application Commentary series, it joins a

number of commentary series which make a deliberate attempt to explore the contemporary significance of a particular book of the Bible. Each passage is treated in three sections: Original Meaning, Bridging Contexts, and Contemporary Significance. The commentary does not require an understanding of Hebrew and Greek.

Jobes' exposition and application of the text is fresh and insightful. Immediately one can see this commentary providing background for a sermon or study series.

The story of Esther is perfect guidance for us "when we find ourselves in a situation where right and wrong are not so clearly defined and every choice we have seems to be a troubling mixture of good and bad."

The writer asks interesting questions of this Old Testament book. For example: Who is the main character of Esther? Is it Esther or is it Mordecai? Wisely, the commentary allows this to be answered by the reader. Yet, in wrestling with the option one gains insight into how God might use different people in a difficult situation. Certainly Esther provides an example for the church of male/female partnership as leaders.

Particularly insightful is the treatment of interplay of "providence" and human behavior. By maintaining a healthy tension between the two poles one can appreciate God's utilization of our best effort for his perfect purposes.

The commentary's introduction is insightful and provocative. For preaching points, one should pay special attention to this introductory material.

One would hope that the other volumes in this NIV Application Commentary series are as inspirational as "Esther."

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, Texas

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Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 1-24* (The New International Commentary on the Old Testament). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997.

Daniel Block's massive commentary will become a standard for Ezekiel studies for years to come. The commentary draws together the best insights of the two great Ezekiel commentators, Moshe Greenberg and Walther Zimmerli, and then moves beyond them. In the tradition of Greenberg, Block emphasizes the literary unity and artistry of Ezekiel. In the tradition of Zimmerli, Block leaves no linguistic or theological stone unturned.

Block's approach is guided by four simple questions, behind which lies a maze of potential complexity: "(1) Ezekiel, what are you saying? (the text-critical issue); (2) Ezekiel, why do you say it like that? (the cultural and literary issue); (3) Ezekiel, what do you mean? (the hermeneutical and theological issue); (4) Ezekiel, what is the significance of this message for me? (the application issue)" (p. xi).

The commentary on each textual unit begins with Block's translation, along with footnotes on text-critical matters. A second section, "Nature and Design," includes discussion of style, structure and literary context, followed by verse by verse exposition. A third section, "Theological Implications," summarizes "the permanent theological lessons of the unit" (p. xii).

The commentary's chief strength is its attention to detail. One finds, e.g., two pages on the Tammuz cult (8:14-15); identification of the divination techniques "belomancy or rhabdomancy" (21:26 [ET 21:21]); and citation of extrabiblical texts that

describe the departure of the god from its temple as a prelude to foreign invasion (275-76).

Having said that, readers should not be deterred by the many details. One can easily dip into the commentary at any point and discover a nugget. The commentary both presents a thorough exposition of the text, and offers a clear restatement of Ezekiel's theological vision. Block does not hesitate to allow Ezekiel's challenges of Jerusalem's theological certainties also to address, and destabilize, some of our own theological and ideological "certainties."

Criticism of this commentary will seem like grasping at straws. Rather, two observations will suffice. The first pertains to how Block integrates the literary structure of composite texts with theological reflections on entire units. Consider the treatment of chapters 8-11. Although Block concedes that these chapters are composite, including, e.g., two unrelated oracles that are clearly editorial insertions (11:1-13; 11:14-21), he argues for the "literary cohesion" of chapters 8-11. Accordingly, the "Theological Implications" of the temple vision of chapters 8-11 occurs at the end of the entire unit, after the editorial framing of the entire unit in 11:22-25. The two "relatively independent" literary units (11:1-13; 11:14-21) lead Block to include two sections of "Theological Implications" prior to the "Theological Implications" section for chapters 8-11. Thus, although the entire unit has a logical coherence, as argued well on pp. 342-45, the theological implications of chapters 8-11 must be sought in three different places (pp. 340, 355, 359). The impact of Ezekiel's editorial art would have been enhanced had the "Theological Implications" of chapters 8-11 also presented an integrated theological reading of the entire unit. The only significant theological reflection on the editorial insertion of 11:14-21 occurs in an earlier section, which indicates that these verses represent "a promissory note of restoration" even before the judgment has come to completion, a kind of "light at the end of the tunnel" (p. 356).

The second observation concerns how the commentary allows the shocking dimensions of Ezekiel's words and actions to impinge on the "Theological Implications" of the text. The strength of the commentary is its consistent laying bare "The Enduring Theology of Ezekiel" (47). Because of this commitment to a "permanent theological message" (355), Block seems, at times, reluctant to engage in dispute or even in conversation with Ezekiel. When Ezekiel seems too strange or offers excessively violent imagery, Block seeks, rather than to offer resistance, to explain why we ought not consider the language offensive. Although it is clear that "No one presses the margins of literary propriety as severely as Ezekiel" (466), there seems often to be an explanation that softens the severity. Three examples follow that illustrate the complexity and the ambiguity inherent in wrestling with Ezekiel's troubling texts.

First, the commentary on 4:1-5:17 notes that we may be "offended by the sheer terror of Yahweh's pronouncements," and then suggests that we not allow our reactions to "detract from the profoundly theological nature of the message" (216). The value of shocking the audience has been blunted.

Second, in the Excursus on "The Offense of Ezekiel's Gospel" (467) Block examines and explains the objectionable images of sexual violence in chapter 16. Defending Ezekiel against all charges of inappropriate language and violent imagery, Block suggests we not impose "anachronistic agendas arising out of alien cultural contexts" (469). Rather, it is "The intensity of the divine passion [that] determined the



unique and often shocking style of the prophet" (470). In the "Theological Implications" that follow (520-22), Block allows for no arrogance or smugness in those who claim to be people of God today. The equivalent "shock value" today is not, however, suggested. Could we not imagine the story in reverse? God's people are the abusive or unreliable and absent father.

Third, the "Theological Implications" of chapter 23 helpfully notes that the people of God are "vulnerable to the seductive appeal of other allegiances" (764). But these implications do not at the same time address the problem of *militarism* as Israel's root problem. The text becomes an occasion, instead, for noting the destructiveness of marital infidelity.

A commentary as massive as this one that advocates profoundly at every turn *for* Ezekiel and his God, and *against* our own biases, complicity with evil, and idolatries, deserves our deepest respect. Although the commentary will be most useful for those who know Hebrew, its riches are not at all inaccessible to the reader who is looking for consistent theological reflection on one of the most difficult of Biblical books.

Gordon H. Matties, Concord College, Winnipeg

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Clements, Ronald E., *Ezekiel* [WBC] Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press 1996

Lind, Millard C., *Ezekiel* [Believers Church Bible Commentary] Scottdale, Pa: Herald Press 1996

Block, Daniel I., *The Book of Ezekiel Chapters 25-48*, [NICOT] Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1998

There has been a good crop of commentaries on Ezekiel in the last four years and it has been an interesting experience to read these three together. Clements has produced an excellent contribution to the Westminster Bible Companion series which is committed to stimulating faithful Christian living based on a sound grasp of the message of the text for its original historical readers and for today. Following a brief introduction which sums up Ezekiel's message in a nutshell and gives a brief indication of his times, the main sections of the book are introduced with an overview and then subdivided into sensible passages for reading each day, or each week. The NRSV text is given selectively followed by an explanatory description of flow of the main message and discussion of points which are difficult for readers today. Occasionally the writer waxes lyrical e.g. on the final battle against evil in chapter 38 he writes, 'It challenges an belief in the inevitability of progress in human government and world order. Evil cannot easily and readily be wrung from the fabric of human folly. There can be no gradual squeezing out of the sin-soaked garments of history.'

Lind writes concisely but gives more attention to explaining his understanding of the structure of the book and its several parts. His analysis is based on the language of the text and for the most part is convincing. In keeping with the format of the series to which this book belongs each major section is introduced by an overview. The passages within each section are treated to a preview, an outline [analysis], explanatory notes on the details of each part of the outline, then comments on the text in its Biblical context

and the text in the life of the church. The last of these is principally the life of the Anabaptists or Mennonites. The strength of this commentary is both the analysis and the succinct discussion of key words in the text. At the end of the book is a collection of brief essays on frequently recurring motifs and helpful notes, two maps, three diagrams and a quite extensive bibliography.

Block's is the second volume of his magisterial commentary on this prophetic book. In some respects he combines the virtues of Clements and Lind but adds much more. Block too is preoccupied with the structure and literary shape of each passage and its contribution to the purpose and overall message of the book. The treatment of each section is in two unequal parts. The major part is called 'Nature and Design' and the minor part, 'Theological Implications'. This does not always work out quite as well as it might for, unlike Lind, who employs his analytical tools consistently, Block has discussions of 'Nature and Design' for chapters within the larger sections and nothing on the theological implications at some points where such reflection might be expected. At the same time the discussion of individual units is very thorough, setting out alternative views and the evidence for them without losing the sense of where the argument is going. In both the text and the footnotes he interacts with an impressive range of scholarship. He has excellent discussions of difficult topics such as the failure of Ezekiel's prophecy against Tyre and he supplements the commentary with five excursi: on the infusion of the Spirit, the background and implications of the vision of dry bones for ideas of resurrection and afterlife, on Gog in Jewish and Christian writings and the life-giving river. He finds ways of integrating chapters 40 - 48 with themes treated earlier in the book. Useful information is summarised in charts, tables, diagrams and maps. Undoubtedly this, together with his first volume, will be *the* commentary with which scholars will interact for the foreseeable future both on questions of structure and matters of detail.

For encouraging study of Ezekiel in church groups, Clements is superb. Only rarely will his critical inclinations ruffle the faithful. For students Lind provides an excellent way to grasp the structure of the text and a challenging commentary for today's world from his Mennonite perspective. For scholarly study Block is invaluable.

Arthur Rowe, Spurgeon's College, London

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Clifford, Richard J. *Proverbs*. OTL. Louisville, KY: Westminster, 1999. 286pp.

Primary contributions of Clifford's commentary are fourfold. The first three pertain to the introduction. First, a reader unfamiliar with wisdom of the Ancient Near East will find in his introduction a helpful sampling drawn from Mesopotamian and Egyptian sources (pp. 8-19). The context provided by such a background enables us to picture the broader world of ancient wisdom, rather than treating sapiential material of the Bible as somehow isolated and unique. Second, his treatment of personified Wisdom and her rival, while acknowledging reminiscences with ANE literature, allows the Hebrew sage freedom to design and employ this device with rich breadth for purposes unique to an Israeli setting (pp. 23-28). Since she occupies such a significant place in Proverbs, judicious interpretation of her origin and role is vital. Third is Clifford's discussion of the Hebrew text and versions—a brief but useful summary

reflecting on the relative value of Qumran, Septuagint, Peshitta, Targum, and Vulgate (pp. 28-30).

Apart from the introductory essays, the commentary itself reads well. It is not bogged down by attempts to press metrical form into every verse. Appeal to Hebrew recurs like seasoning, rendering the volume valuable for novice and specialist alike. Amenemope parallels are offered in chs. 22-24 so that the reader may draw his/her own conclusions. One could wish only that out of his mastery of the material Clifford might have added still more observations concerning surface structures which contribute to rhetorical power within Proverbs. Perhaps another will contribute to this aspect of sapiential study.

Paul Overland

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Tremper Longman, III, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Ecclesiastes*. Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998, xvi + 306 pp., \$35.00.

This commentary on Ecclesiastes is part of the New International Commentary on the Old Testament series. For the most part it is a scholarly work, giving adequate attention to matters of philology, literary style, and theological message, without being pedantic.

The book begins with an exhaustive introduction exploring such background matters as authorship, language, genre, structure, literary style, and the theological message of the writing. He argues that Solomon is not the author, but rather a later personality adopting a Solomonic persona. This author is identified as Qoholeth in Hebrew, or Ecclesiastes in Greek, meaning "assembler" or "one who assembles." Longman explores authorship by drawing on Rabbinic literature, Near Eastern literary texts, and the rest of wisdom literature as a whole.

The language of Ecclesiastes is presented as having Aramaic influence. Consideration is also given to Persian and Greek influence, all of which is important in determining dating. Longman does not find any of the arguments compelling enough to be certain about its origin.

Generally speaking, most scholars conclude that the genre of Ecclesiastes is hard to define, and that it does not have one single genre. In contrast to this, Longman suggests it is a "framed wisdom autobiography." In drawing this conclusion, he makes comparisons with Augustine's *Confessions*, the eleventh tablet of the Gilgamesh Epic, the Sargon Birth Legend, and numerous Akkadian works labeled as "fictional autobiographies."

The structure of Ecclesiastes is presented as being in three parts: 1. A short prologue, introducing some of the themes of Qoholeth's thought (1:1-11); 2. a long monologue by Qoholeth (1:12-12:7); and 3. a brief epilogue (12:8-14). The prologue and epilogue are differentiated from the body of the book by their third person references to the author. However, within this broad tripart structure, Longman does not find a "clear and obvious structure."

The literary style of Ecclesiastes is presented as "difficult to describe." It is said to contain both poetry and prose, with the lines between the two often being blurred. He cites the discrepancies in translation employed by the NRSV and NIV, with the



NRSV team translating more prosaically and the NIV more poetically, formatting much of the book in parallel lines. Longman sides with the NRSV, and accuses the translators of the NIV of over-poeticizing the text. He briefly explores such issues as Hebrew parallelism and proverbial construction.

Longman presents a very strong view of the canonicity of the book of Ecclesiastes. By comparing the writing with both Old and New Testament theology, he presents it as a work that speaks with authority to antiquity as well as to the present day, suggesting its greatest contribution perhaps being its capacity to “vividly capture the despair of a world without God” (p. 40).

Throughout the body of the main commentary, Longman offers his own refreshing translation of each chapter, supporting his views with Rabbinic literature, philological examination, and the best of available resources. Longman’s thorough examination of this somewhat cryptic book is both compelling and interesting, and useful for both scholarly and devotional reflection. Glen Robitaille, Ashland, OH

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David Alan Black, *It’s Still Greek to Me: An Easy-to-Understand Guide to Intermediate Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1998. 192 pp. \$14.99.

A noted expert in New Testament Greek with a heart for its use in effective preaching and ministry, D. A. Black has provided a winsomely written review of Greek (and English!) grammar. The grammar of Greek nouns, verbs, and other forms, together with the syntax of Greek clauses, is presented in a well-organized manner, replete with examples, practice exercises (with an answer key in the back), and suggestions for further study at the end of each chapter, directing the user to the standard Greek reference works. A postscript provides directions for ongoing growth in facility in Greek and in the application of one’s growing knowledge of Greek to ministerial tasks.

This book is only “intermediate” at a few places, for example the fine survey of the specialized uses of Greek noun cases. I would therefore highly recommend this book to students currently studying Greek as a good-humored and clear supplement to any standard textbook, particularly if one’s grasp of grammatical terminology needs refreshing, and to those seeking consolidation of the Greek they learned in an introductory Greek class. David A. deSilva

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Philip W. Comfort and David P. Barrett (editors), *The Complete Text of the Earliest New Testament Manuscripts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1999. 652 pp. \$49.95.

The textual variants listed at the bottom of the critical Greek New Testaments, reduced there data for a scholarly enterprise, now come alive as our earliest samples of Christian Scriptures. Thanks to the diligent efforts of Comfort and Barrett, the complete texts of fifty-five papyri and five early uncials, all dating from the third century AD and before, are now available to a broad (Greek-reading) audience. These manuscripts have been faithfully transcribed, down to the preservation of the abbreviations used by the scribes (which are explained in the introduction), the actual line and page breaks, the placement of “iota subscripts” on the line, and the absence of editorial breathing marks,

accents, and punctuation. Footnotes provide information about the corrections made to the manuscript either by the copyist, a proofreader, or later users. Any reconstructions offered by Comfort and Barrett to fill in damaged portions of the papyri are bracketed. Each manuscript is prefaced with a critical introduction concerning its dating and provenance as well as any notable peculiarities or proclivities of its scribe (for example, whether or not he was a Christian interested in harmonizing one gospel with another, and the like). The introductions to major papyri like P46, P66, and P75 are especially fine. The reader thus has access to an astounding collection of ancient manuscripts of the New Testament without the expenditures of travel to the various museums where they are housed. The editors have provided two tables of contents: the first enables one to find a given manuscript by its standard abbreviation, the second enables one to look up New Testament passages attested in the manuscripts. They have also included rather legible photographs of a page from most of the manuscripts they have transcribed.

Many of these papyri were discovered in the sands of Egypt beginning in 1898 as part of the excavations in the trash piles of Oxyrynchus, which provided a cache of thousands of literary and non-literary texts (e.g., bills of sale, inventory lists, and the like). Others were purchased from Egyptian antiquities dealers during the twentieth century. Their importance for textual criticism became immediately apparent, since these papyri pre-date the major uncials (Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, and Vaticanus) by two to three centuries. In the case of P46 and P66, for example, we find copies of portions of the New Testament dating from about 150 AD, bringing us to within 100 years of the autograph. The manuscripts included range in length from three lines (P12, containing part of Heb 1:1 written on the corner of a personal letter) to 172 manuscript pages (P46, the Pauline corpus from Romans to 1 Thessalonians, with Hebrews placed after Romans).

The main benefit of this volume is not, I would suggest, providing grist for the mills of amateur textual critics. Rather, it provides a companion volume to our critical Greek New Testaments (the UBS and the Nestle-Aland). The latter are eclectic reconstructions, a composite derived from countless sources: the texts in Comfort and Barrett's volume provide for us actual texts read as "Scripture" in Christian communities in Egypt during the second and third centuries. The volume moves us beyond interest in "reconstructing" the autographs toward studying the Christian Scriptures as they were read and interpreted in communities of faith in those early, highly formative centuries. The tendencies of the copyists can be seen not as perversions of the text (though, of course, from the standpoint of the textual critical task they are), but as windows into the early Christians' presuppositions about their Scriptures and into early Christian interpretation of its message. Those with a growing facility in Greek will, of course, gain the greatest benefit from this volume, being able to read the manuscripts themselves and experience "Romans" or "John" as they were read by brothers and sisters in 2<sup>nd</sup>-century Egypt; those without such facility, however, will still find in this volume perhaps the best introduction to the individual manuscripts and their character, as well as to the scribal practices used in the early transmission of our New Testament.

David A. deSilva

## Book Reviews

N. Clayton Croy, *A Primer of Biblical Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1999. pp. xviii + 264. \$18.00 (paper).

In a market glutted with introductory Greek textbooks, Croy's new volume distinguishes itself above the rest. Written out of years of experience teaching Greek, this book provides a clear, solid, and pedagogically astute contribution to the language classroom.

Some recent textbooks overwhelm the student with too much information about (sometimes rather contrived) underlying linguistic patterns or historical development of morphological forms. In an attempt to make Greek approachable and friendly, many other textbooks oversimplify the language and end up "dumbing down" Greek. Croy's steers a middle course between this Scylla and that Charybdis, offering concise yet clear and reliable introductions to the grammar and syntax of Greek. Especially to be commended is his careful nuancing of the significance of the Aorist tense in each of the Greek moods (indicative, imperative, etc.) -- something that many popular-level Greek textbooks and reference works tend to present incorrectly as inherently "simple action in the past." Also noteworthy is his presentation of the participle. Considered by all teachers of Greek with which I have had contact as the chief hurdle in learning Greek, the participle is here presented quite clearly and explained quite fully. Teachers will find the order of presentation to be quite natural.

Each lesson is introduced by a vocabulary list for memorization, after which comes the discussion of the new grammar with appropriate paradigms and examples. A main strength of this textbook is the variety and abundance of exercises Croy has composed and assembled. Every chapter has a set of ten to fourteen "artificial" Greek sentences composed by Croy, providing practice in the new grammatical concepts introduced (together, of course, with the cumulative grammar encountered), eight to twelve sentences taken from the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament), and eight to twelve sentences from the New Testament. The biblical sentences are accompanied by a vocabulary list at the end of every chapter, so that these exercises provide an inductive dimension to the course (the student is translating imperatives or participles in these exercises before the formal presentation). Finally, Croy provides four or five English sentences at the end of each lesson to be rendered into Greek. Working in both directions is a long-standing and effective way of internalizing the logic of the language and thinking through the significations of cases, tenses, and the like.

This feature raises Croy's volume above those rival texts that have similarly well-balanced presentations of the grammar, but an insufficient number of exercises to provide the students with the essential practice or exercises that are drawn strictly from the New Testament (and strictly Greek-to-English). The student who completes exercises from each group leaves the course aware and unafraid of the Septuagint, which is a great benefit for their own study of the New Testament and early church, as well as equipped and motivated to continue reading both in the Septuagint and New Testament.

Forty pages of paradigms, complete lists of Greek-to-English and English-to-Greek vocabulary, and a guide to further study and useful reference works complete the textbook. This back matter provides the student with essential tools for review during



the course and for ongoing work in Greek reading, as well as with pointers for ongoing learning.

No Greek textbook will match perfectly the objectives of the professor (unless he or she is the author of his or her own textbook). Would that the author had included a fuller presentation of the optative mood! Nevertheless, I find his assessment of what needs to be included in an introductory Greek course to be accurate and judicious, and commend the work to teachers of Greek for its unique contributions to the preparation of biblical scholars and ministers of the Word.

David A. deSilva

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J.K. Elliott, *A Bibliography of Greek New Testament Manuscripts*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.. (SNTSMS 109; Cambridge: CUP, 2000). hb.

This revised version almost doubles the amount of information contained in the first edition of 1989 and offers an indispensable guide to work done on individual manuscripts of the Greek New Testament. Elliott does not offer us any information about the manuscripts themselves (K. Aland, *Kurzgefasste Liste*, 1994 offers that), nor is this book interested in particular variant readings supported by a manuscript. What this book does contain is a list of the first publication of a manuscript (the *editio princeps*) and 'details of articles, studies and collations of these manuscripts, including those dealing with text, illustrations and palaeography' (plates of manuscripts are also noted).

We might begin with the growth evident in this second edition. In terms of papyri, the 1989 edition took the list to P95, the new edition takes us to P115. In terms of uncials, not only do we have an increase from 0277 up to 0309, but Elliott has also decided on "Majuscules" as the general title. Similarly, while the 1989 edition took the list up to 2790 "cursives," the new edition has opted for "miniscules," and stops at 282. The lectionary list in the first edition went to l2280 (with huge blank spaces where no studies were noted), the new edition goes to l2412 and has identified numerous studies (both old and new). Overall we have grown from 210 spaciouly laid out pages, to 287 much more closely packed pages. Some of the growth, and the reason for the second edition, is clearly the ever-increasing number of new manuscripts which have been discovered. Another reason is clearly a filling in of gaps in the knowledge of the literature at the time of the first edition.

In terms of content it is difficult to evaluate a bibliography like this. I thought of two simple tests. How did the new edition compare on items I had marked in my copy of the first edition? And did the new edition notice two studies that I had written in the years between the editions? On the first test Elliott has scored 100% in the papyri, and missed only two items in the majuscules (029 add Amélineau, *Notice*, pp. 404-407 for description and transcription of the Paris portions; 0246 add Greenlee, *Nine Uncial Palimpsests*, 122-127, with 2 plates). On the second test Elliott scored one out of two (not including Head and Warren on P13, *NTS* 43 [1997] 466-473).

These are patently unscientific tests, but nevertheless suggest that we should not expect this to be a completely exhaustive bibliography. This is, in any case, never claimed and a separate volume could probably be produced on the papyri alone. While it may not be exhaustive, it is however quite extensive. If you come across a

manuscript, in a printed edition, a monastery, a library; then you will generally find something in this bibliography with which to begin any investigative work done on that manuscript. As far as I could determine, Elliott has provided enough information to find the item you are after, or, as is perhaps more likely considering the range of material listed here, sufficient detail is given to enable an inter-library loan to be ordered.

In conclusion, this work in its revised second edition further improves an indispensable reference book which fills a massive gap in New Testament scholarship and helps reveal other gaps to textual critics and librarians. We congratulate the compiler. His *Bibliography* is much to be welcomed and should find a home in an excellent theological library.

Peter M. Head, Cambridge

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John R. Kohlenberger III, *The Greek New Testament. UBS4 with NRSV & NIV*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993.

Two of the most important modern translations, the New Revised Standard Version and the New International Version, stand side-by-side with the critical text of the Greek New Testament as published by the united Bible Societies. The critical apparatus in the Greek text (i.e., textual variant information and references to Old Testament citations or allusions) has been removed in favor of footnotes that provide the Greek text standing behind the variants noted in the NRSV and NIV footnotes. That is, where the NRSV note says "other ancient authorities add..." or "omit...", the new notes to the Greek text supply the variant noted by the NRSV.

The volume is very useful as a tool that allows the reader easily to compare these two English translations with one another and with the Greek text. By diligent comparison, the reader will be able to explore the reasons for the divergences in the translations, discover options not chosen by either translation, and even critique these translations for bringing meanings into the text not easily justified by the Greek. The book provides automatic safeguards, therefore, against confusing any single translation (however excellent) with the final "Word."

While one can readily understand why the full apparatus of the critical Greek text was not imported into this volume, it does thereby limit the usefulness of this book. If a student wants to do serious work in textual criticism, or to evaluate the merit of the few variants noted in the footnotes here, he or she will still need to consult the critical editions or Bruce Metzger's *Textual Commentary on the New Testament*. Additionally, the loss of cross-references to Old Testament texts cited or alluded to in the New Testament (aside from the NIV's footnotes, which do cite explicit quotations) will make this volume less useful for investigations of the intertexture between the testaments.

David A. deSilva

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Bruce M. Metzger, *Lexical Aids for Students of New Testament Greek*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998, xi + 100 pp. \$9.99.

These lexical resources for the study of New Testament Greek vocabulary by a giant in the field of textual criticism, lexicography, and canonical history have been

available to students since 1946, having undergone significant revisions in 1955 and 1969. Until now, this book has been published, in essence, privately by Dr. Metzger. Now Baker Books has included the title in its catalog, making this proven volume more readily accessible to a wide academic audience.

The first part of the book presents lists of words classified according to the frequency in the New Testament, from words occurring 500 times or more to words occurring ten times in the NT. The aim of these lists is to provide students of NT Greek with basic English equivalents of the more common Greek words so as to facilitate actual reading of the NT by minimizing trips to a lexicon. The second part provides a set of words grouped according to their root (e.g., the family of words built on the root  $\pi\iota\sigma\tau$ - are presented together). This is, of course, a very useful way to reinforce students' memorization of vocabulary, provided one avoids the danger of slipping over from the concept of word group into performing word studies according to the "exegetical fallacy" method. Metzger includes a helpful discussion on the formation of words in Greek (e.g., the alpha-privative, the meanings of various suffixes, the formation of words from compound roots, and the like).

Finally, a series of appendices offer varied helps. There is a rather comprehensive table of Indo-European languages, which concludes with a more helpful discussion of Greek-English cognates. Appendix II provides a visual aid for understanding prepositions and a discussion of the meaning of prepositions when used as prefixes for verbs. A table of correlative adverbs and pronouns follows, extremely helpful as a guide for a rather difficult set of words to keep distinct in one's head. The most useful resource is Appendix IV, the chart of principal parts of irregular verbs. Finally, Metzger provides a list of feminine nouns of the second declension and nouns which are sometimes feminine, sometimes masculine.

This remains an indispensable aid for beginning Greek students, strongly recommended as a supplement to a standard Greek grammar for any introductory-level seminary course in Biblical Greek. Once students have facility with reading Greek, however, they will want to begin to probe the information available in the great lexica on the full range of meanings of these words (Louw-Nida; Liddell-Scott; Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker). For example, the one-word translation of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  as "grace" will work where the aim is translating a Greek passage as a homework exercise in beginning Greek; for exegesis one will need to immerse oneself in richer discussions of the lexical ranges and cultural contexts of the term.

David A. deSilva

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Cleon L. Rogers Jr., and Cleon L. Rogers III, *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998, pp. xl + 652, \$39.99.

This volume, a fully updated version of *The Linguistic Key to the New Testament*, offers both the benefits and pitfalls of any work of its kind. On the positive side, the authors have painstakingly and carefully provided the parsing of the majority of words in the New Testament, as well as basic English equivalents of these words (together with the numerical entry of the word in *The NIV Exhaustive Concordance* by Goodrick and Kohlenberger). They have also attempted to give guidance to the student with regard to how the grammatical categories should be understood in a particular instance (e.g.,



when a genitive should be taken as a “genitive of description” or an adverbial participle as “causal” rather than “temporal”), as well as to set certain terms in their philosophical or cultural context. Their comments in this regard are frequently excellent, certain to lead the student down useful avenues of interpretation. A third level of help involves the citation within many verses of relevant scholarly literature (a selection showing excellent breadth, one should add) for further investigation or deeper discussion. In compiling such an aid to reading the New Testament in Greek, the authors are heartily to be commended, as is their book.

The pitfalls? Students may be tempted to believe everything they read as “conclusive” or somehow truly representative of the face of scholarship. At many points, however, the authors’ comments or exegetical choices are suspect: the tool is a great aid, as long as the user treats those comments with suspicion and goes the extra mile to test them. For example, when the authors write concerning the word *apokalypsis* at Rev 1:1 that “the word is often used to describe a type of Jewish lit[erature] of the first century B. C., which arose under persecution. It used many symbols and was published under the name of an important OT person” (610), the reader should be advised that a group of scholars working together arrived at a much more careful, nuanced, and helpful definition of apocalyptic literature, and consult the more recent reference works on the topic listed by the authors, who remain, however, sadly uninfluenced by these investigations. In the notes on Rom 3:23, the phrase *dia pisteōs Iēsou Christou* receives this comment: “‘through faith in Jesus Christ’. Gen[itive] is best understood as obj[ective] gen[itive], rather than subjective gen[itive], ‘the faithfulness of Jesus Christ’ (Moo; Dunn; GGBB, 114-115).” The wise student will go to the discussions in Moo and Dunn to which the authors refer, and indeed to the host of literature on this vexed *crux interpretum*, rather than trust the authors’ evaluation of which is better (for many evangelical scholars would argue vociferously that they have made an infelicitous choice). In the treatment of Heb 6:6, the authors correctly identify the participles “crucifying the Son of God again and holding him up to public shame” as the reason why repentance for the apostate is “impossible,” but then go on to explain that second repentance would be impossible because it would *require* a second crucifixion of Jesus. This is, however, a suspect reading, since the participles give every indication (through grammatical agreement) of describing the circumstances which accompany “falling away” (in which case it is the gross insult offered to Jesus by the apostate which renders a return to favor “impossible”).

These three examples are lifted up merely as a caution to the user of this basically commendable guide. “Test everything, hold fast to what is good” among the comments and exegetical judgements offered by the authors. No reference guide should be treated as a one-volume shortcut to exegesis. If the volume is used as a starting place only, leading the student to do her or his own homework on whether or not a certain dative or subjunctive should be taken one way rather than another as well as to dig around in more detailed lexicons, it will be a valuable *vade mecum* indeed. I personally would have found the *Key* more helpful if the authors didn’t attempt to give a ruling on the more difficult exegetical questions, presenting rather the leading options and bibliographic entries to which to turn for both or all sides of the question. Nevertheless, the authors have done especially the beginning Greek reader a great service (and indeed it is a task which can only be taken up with the heart of a servant), and their work will

be an important companion in those first years of using Greek for bible study and sermon preparation. David A. deSilva

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Richard Longenecker, ed., *Life in the Face of Death*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

This is the third in the McMaster New Testament Studies series; a series designed to address particular themes in the New Testament that are of crucial concern to Christians today. This volume admirably fulfils this brief. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is at the very heart of the Christian faith and this fine collection addresses the resurrection from a number of different points of view.

It begins with three essays dealing with the historical and social background to life and death in the Ancient Near East, the Greco-Roman world and second temple Judaism. Each of these essays provides fascinating and informative reading against which to read the New Testament message.

The rest of the book then examines the New Testament teaching under three broad headings: the Gospels, Paul and the early church. The synoptics are dealt with as a bloc while John is the subject of a fine study by Andrew Lincoln. It was particularly pleasing to see this essay written from a narrative critical perspective and numerous connections established between the theme of the resurrection and other main themes of the Gospel according to John.

The section on Paul addresses the subject of resurrection and immortality, the question of development in Paul's thinking about the resurrection and the connection between the resurrection and the Christian life in Paul's thought.

The final section of the book examines the teaching about the resurrection in Acts, Hebrews and the Apocalypse.

As the above survey show the volume is comprehensive in its scope. It is a volume that is 'food for the soul' as well as the mind as the impact of the resurrection message of the New Testament is carefully unfolded against the background established by the historical studies. The focus is on the implications of the resurrection message in the New Testament documents. The central importance of this event is clearly established and its implications for Christian Life well expounded.

This would be an excellent resource for a preaching series on the resurrection and its significance.

Perhaps the volume could have been enhanced with a brief essay detailing the evidence for the resurrection as an historical event. While there are many volumes that do this and this is the clear presupposition of the volume, a clear statement of such a position would appear to be in order in a day and age when the historicity of the event itself remains under attack.

Bill Salier, Cambridge, United Kingdom

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Rainer Riesner, *Paul's Early Period: Chronology, Mission Strategy and Theology*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998, xvi + 535 pp, \$50.00/£33.99.

*Paul's Early Period* is a translation, with only minor corrections, of the 1994 original publication, *Die Frühzeit des Apostels Paulus* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr). In this

lengthy monograph, Riesner combines a characteristically Teutonic thoroughness and attention to detail, with a refreshing absence of any continental theology of suspicion.

Taking as its opening premise '[t]he history of early Christianity and the development of its theological convictions are inseparably connected', Riesner undertakes a detailed assessment of the chronology of the early years of Paul's Christian mission.

Riesner suggests that the popular stance that Paul's letters represent primary source material and the Acts data represent secondary source material is too simplistic. It should not be overlooked that the autobiographical elements in Paul's correspondence may occasionally be biased or include gaps; and some of the Acts material may actually provide us with first-hand primary source material. It emerges that dependence on the Pauline letters alone provides no firm chronological datum, whereas the Acts framework, and especially the 'we-passages' (which are consistent with Lukan authorship) prove to be remarkably useful in this regard. The value of Luke's material is enhanced when the author provides additional elements of secular historical information which can be incorporated into the overall chronology; and made yet more sophisticated when approximate details of travel times are included in the overview. There are clearly gaps in the Acts account, notably where elements are omitted in the interests of idealization; but this does not force us to draw the conclusion that Luke consequently chose to 'make up' the evidence. Once a critical Acts chronology is developed, it emerges that this is not inconsistent with the very limited information which can be derived from the Pauline corpus. In this regard, particular attention is given to Paul's mission to and correspondence with those in Thessalonica.

Riesner incorporates into his debate early church traditional material, later New Testament scholarship, and recent advances in ancient historical and scientific evidence. This wide-range of primary and secondary sources is substantiated by 115 pages of bibliography and indexes. These tools are significantly let down, however, by the very partial index of authors which spans little more than four pages, rarely notes those scholars who are relegated to footnotes, and consequently does little to reflect the degree and extent of those footnotes or assist the reader who wishes to evaluate Riesner's assessment of a range of cited scholars.

At a time when the book of Acts has seen a significant revival in scholarly interest, the availability of this extensive piece of research, now in translation, will be of considerable value to a wider pool of Lukan and Pauline scholars.

Andrew D. Clarke, University of Aberdeen

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Günter Wagner, ed., *An Exegetical Bibliography of the New Testament: Romans and Galatians*. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1996. Xiv + 379 pp. n.p.

Literature on the New Testament has mushroomed exponentially, so that it is now impossible, and even an unwise use of time, to read everything that is written on a particular subject. It is becoming increasingly difficult even to read what is written on a single letter, such as Romans. And anyone who has worked on a commentary knows that there is much repetition in the work of scholars. Those of us who do research are grateful to Günter Wagner whose earlier series *Bibliographical Aids* assisted scholars



in conducting research. In 1981 a second series was begun, and volumes on Matthew and Mark (1983), Luke and Acts (1985), John and the Johannine letters (1987) have appeared thus far. Now the volume on Galatians and Romans has gone to press, and Wagner informs us that the delay is fortuitous since it enabled him to include recent research on Paul. Indeed, since the publication of E.P. Sanders' *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (1977) articles and books on Paul's understanding of the law and Judaism have been a virtual torrent. The new evaluation of Paul is especially significant in Romans and Galatians, and much of that work is contained in the present work. Nonetheless, all bibliographies are destined to be dated, and Wagner includes items which were published through 1994. Readers should note that the book was published in 1996, and so the cut-off date is understandable.

I sampled the bibliography at various places and found its coverage to be excellent. Obviously, no bibliography will catch everything, but it would be churlish to expect perfection when the task is so overwhelming. Wagner's work is especially helpful in indicating where a particular text is discussed in books. Many bibliographies list relevant articles and commentaries, but listing where books discuss a particular text is a work of supererogation. Recording such information is painstaking work and would induce some of us to insanity! We can be grateful for the labor of Wagner and his coworkers in this task. Exegesis does not occur in a historical or contemporary vacuum, and it is hoped that the bibliography contained here will enable scholars to interpret the New Testament more rigorously and faithfully.

Thomas R. Schreiner, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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David A. deSilva, *The Hope of Glory. Honor Discourse and New Testament Interpretation*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999.

A major development in biblical interpretation over the last few decades has been the arrival of analytical methods from other fields of study. Like immigrants landing at Ellis Island they come from diverse lands: anthropology, gender studies, linguistics, literary criticism, psychology, rhetoric, sociology, etc. They arrive with remnants of their previous habitats, various practices and perspectives, and thereby change their new environment.

This review examines a significant new book that employs one of those recent arrivals: honor/shame analysis. Honor and shame are fundamentally anthropological categories, but their use in interpreting ancient texts is closely related to both rhetorical and sociological dynamics. Through appeals to honor and shame, authors hope to persuade their readers to act in certain ways (a rhetorical aim), usually with a view to strengthening or weakening connections with certain groups of persons (a sociological effect). This convergence of methods is evident in *The Hope of Glory* by David A. deSilva.

The book has seven major chapters and a brief conclusion. The first chapter establishes the importance of honor and shame as cultural values in the first century Mediterranean world. Although there is generalization and perhaps overstatement in saying that a person from this era, "...whether Gentile or Jew, was trained from childhood to desire honor and avoid disgrace" and was "oriented from birth toward

seeking the approval of the significant others" (p. 2, 3), the significance of honor and shame as motivators of behavior cannot be denied. A major concept defined in this chapter is the "court of reputation," that group of persons who grant honor or dispense blame. The critical question for ethnic or religious subcultures, such as first century Jews and Christians, is who will constitute this court.

The major achievement of this chapter is a sort of phenomenology of honor/shame discourse. DeSilva answers the basic question, how do we know honor/shame discourse when we see it? Moving beyond the mere listing of vocabulary, deSilva discusses the kinds and sources of honor, the role of honor in patron-client relationships, the importance of one's name and body in representations of honor, and the role of gender. Finally, deSilva relates honor and shame to rhetoric, particularly to the threefold means of persuasion: *logos* (rational appeals), *ethos* (stressing the credibility of the speaker), and *pathos* ("emotional" appeals).

In chapter two deSilva examines honor discourse in the Gospel of Matthew. In contrast to some interpreters who apply the canons of ancient rhetoric casually and indiscriminately to all genres of ancient texts, deSilva acknowledges the difficulty of rhetorical analysis of gospel material, i.e. narrative. Proceeding cautiously, however, he shows how the character of Jesus is effectively an indirect *ethos* argument. By his origin (virginal conception), his acts (healings and exorcisms), his death (an ostensibly dishonorable event that is reinterpreted), and his resurrection (vindication of Jesus' honor by God), Matthew upholds Jesus as the model of a God-honoring life.

Chapter three involves a similar treatment of the Gospel of John. Jesus' origin, expressed in the magnificent Johannine prologue, indicates his honorable status. Likewise, the miraculous signs in John signify Jesus' honor. The well-known emphasis in the fourth gospel on the voluntary nature of Jesus' death ("I lay down my life for the sheep," 10:15) reveals the nobility of that event.

In chapter four deSilva turns to epistolary material: 1 and 2 Thessalonians. These letters are read in the light of the thriving religious life of the city of Thessalonica, especially the cult of the emperor and traditional Greco-Roman religion. DeSilva sees Paul's aims as by no means limited to the widely recognized issues of his own credibility and of eschatology. Rather, these epistles "are chiefly concerned to establish the new believers' commitment to the alternative culture of Christianity," "to counteract the power of...attempts by the dominant culture to reclaim its deviant members." (pp. 91, 94, my emphasis) I found this chapter less persuasive than the others. The issues of Paul's credibility (1 Thess 2) and questions about the second coming (1 Thess 4-5; 2 Thess) loom large in these letters. While this correspondence perhaps *can* be seen as a social engineering strategy to "negate the effects of being shamed by outsiders" (p. 94), the method here seems to privilege social engineering over theological and pastoral concerns. DeSilva is not necessarily creating honor/shame phenomena *ex nihilo*, but he may elevate them disproportionately.

The next chapter investigates the Corinthian epistles. Social-scientific analysis of this correspondence has demonstrated the socio-economic stratification of the church there. Thus the problem of factionalism at Corinth, the tension between the "strong" and the "weak," problems at the Lord's Supper, and the divisive use of spiritual gifts all reflect the negative aspects of a culture obsessed with honor. Paul, of course,

would say obsessed with wrong definitions of honor. Specific texts in both epistles are helpfully illuminated by honor/shame analysis.

The sixth chapter treats the Epistle to the Hebrews. DeSilva highlights the readers' past experience as one of verbal assaults on their honor, physical punishment, and the loss of material goods. Their present experience is one of flagging zeal. No specific crisis seems to be in view, but rather "the lingering effects of the believers' loss of status and esteem in their neighbor's eyes and their inability to regain a place in society." (p. 149) The ancient concept of patronage enters deSilva's discussion of Hebrews. Thus, the numerous comparative arguments in Hebrews are seen as identifying Jesus as a patron (or mediator of God's patronage) whose honored status exceeds that of prophets, angels, Moses, etc. The great danger faced by the readers is that of dishonoring their divine patron and thereby exchanging God's favor for God's wrath. DeSilva's use of honor/shame analysis provides a new way of understanding the difficult concepts of divine wrath and human fear in Hebrews.

The last writing to be examined is the Apocalypse of John. DeSilva rightly points out that the Apocalypse, contrary to some simplified interpretations, actually addresses churches in diverse conditions (chapters 2-3). Christians in Asia Minor had accommodated themselves in varying degrees to pagan religious values. Much of this chapter is structured according to the responses of the three angels in Rev 14: the call to "fear God and give God glory," the declaration of Babylon's fallen, i.e. dishonored, condition, and the description of those who (shamefully) worship the beast.

A danger with any interpretive method is the possibility of coloring the very material it purports to analyze with relative objectivity. A good methods works like a sieve to cull out particular nuggets of interest. A questionable method works like a tinted lens under which everything starts to take on the hue that is sought by the interpreter. Honor/shame analysis in the hands of different interpreters may function in either way. DeSilva generally operates with restraint, using the sieve. Only rarely did the method tend toward the lens, such as seemed to be the case in the chapter on the Thessalonian correspondence. This is a natural development, more a matter of enthusiasm with the method than of distortion. When your favorite tool is a hammer, little wonder that so many texts begin to resemble loose nails. In his conclusion, however, DeSilva shows awareness of the limitations of his method. He argues for an eclectic approach to "recover the full spectrum of meanings within Scripture."

In summary, this text would be a useful supplement in introductory New Testament courses or a superb main text for courses in contemporary hermeneutics.

N. Clayton Croy

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Frank J. Matera. *New Testament Christology*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999, 307 pages, \$26.95 (paper).

The author states, "This book was written to organize and summarize the Christologies already present in the New Testament to assist theologians and students in making greater use of the biblical data in the study of Christology. It differs from other NT Christologies by its use of narrative to uncover the Christology of the New Testament and by its focus on the Christology in the NT" (Preface). Thus, the subject



matter of this book is Christology *within* the confines of the NT and is approached through the methodology of *narrative* criticism. The author further states, "The working hypothesis of this book is simple: we can learn how the writings of the NT understand the person and work of Jesus Christ by paying attention to the explicit and implicit stories of Christ in the NT" (p. 3). The remainder of the book systematically analyzes the Christologies of each writing of the NT with the exception of Philemon, James, 2 Peter, and Jude.

Chapter 1 entitled "Crucified Messiah and Obedient Son of God" covers the Christologies of Mark and Matthew respectively. Chapter 2 entitled "Messiah and Lord of All" presents the Christology of Luke-Acts. Matera analyzes the Christology of each Synoptic Gospel according to its literary structure and unfolding narrative. The Christology of Acts is traced through the various speeches of Peter, Paul and Stephen with a view to ascertaining the underlying stories of Christ assumed in each presentation.

In Chapter 3 on "The Climax of Israel's Story" the author deals with those letters whose Pauline authorship is not disputed. However, he includes 2 Thessalonians since the subject matter and the story presupposed is similar to 1 Thessalonians. In considering these letters, the author proceeds chronologically, beginning with the earlier letters and concluding with Paul's later correspondence in the following order: The Thessalonian correspondence, the Corinthian Correspondence, Galatians, Romans, and Philippians. Chapter 4 entitled "The Revelation of the Mystery" treats the deutero-Pauline epistles (Colossians, Ephesians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus).

Chapter 5 entitled "Victory through Suffering" considers the Christologies of 1 Peter, Hebrews, and Revelation. The common denominator here is the employment of Christology to encourage and strengthen the audience it addresses. In all these writings, therefore, Christology is in the service of the Christian life. Chapter 6 entitled "The Revelatory Word" treats the Gospel of John and the Johannine Epistles, especially 1 John. Matera insists that the Christology of the Fourth Gospel must be read in light of the "privileged information" provided by the Prologue (1:1-18).

Chapter 7 entitled "The Diverse Unity of New Testament Christology" concludes the book. On the one hand, the author affirms that there are diverse Christologies in the NT. These diverse Christologies do not always complement each other. On the other hand, beyond these differences and tensions, there is a profound unity to the claims that the NT makes about Jesus in the stories it tells and presupposes. These claims are summarized under the following categories: (1) Jesus' messiahship; (2) Jesus' significance for Israel and the nations; (3) Jesus' relationship to the church and the world; (4) Jesus' meaning for the human condition; and (5) Jesus' relationship to God. The extensive notes to each chapter appear at the end of the volume. The book contains a select bibliography and index of subjects but no Scripture index.

This volume is a refreshing approach to Christology in the NT from a narrative perspective. While mainly literary and theological in nature, the author touches on some historical aspects in the investigation of the subject matter, especially in connection with the occasion of the Epistles but also in considering the communities behind the Gospels. There are many brief exegetical discussions throughout the book and in the notes. The chief value of this work is the excellent summaries of the Christology of almost every book of the NT. The author displays a special interest in establishing the preexistence

of Christ from the texts of the NT. In the final analysis, the Christologies of the NT are characterized by both unity and diversity but not simple uniformity nor contradiction.

B. Keith Brewer, Drew University Graduate School

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Alister McGrath (general editor), *The NIV Thematic Reference Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999). xxv + 2150 pp., 16 color plates. \$39.99.

The distinctive approach of this Study Bible, based on the text of the New International Version (included in its entirety), is to lead the reader through selected passages dealing with and developing particular themes. This helpfully expands the more familiar "word study" approach fostered by concordances. Rather than looking up all the occurrences of the word "grace" in the NIV, the unnamed editors of the 729-page thematic section lead the reader to various passages that discuss God's grace (even though the word itself may not be used in every passage). Within the text of the NIV itself, one will find the customary introductions to each book of the Bible. These are silent with regard to critical concerns about authorship (e.g., there is no discussion of the multiple authorship of Isaiah, the Maccabean-period dating of Daniel, or the possible pseudonymity of 2 Peter), and of mixed value in terms of reflecting the presumed original situation of the addressees. Thus the introduction to Hebrews perpetuates the notion that this letter is addressed primarily to Jewish Christians tempted to revert to Judaism, although this is derived from the second century title rather than the text itself. The introduction to Romans shies away from mentioning one prominent reason for Romans, namely Paul's desire to secure the churches at Rome as a new support base for a mission to Spain. The introduction to Revelation, on the other hand, is the first I have read in a conservative study Bible to present the vision's purpose with such laudable precision: "to prepare the churches to face the increasing hostility from the Roman state," rather than the usual emphasis on encouragement in the midst of bloody persecution. The primary focus of these introductions is the listing of the major themes to which each book will make a contribution (keyed into the thematic outlines in the second half of the volume).

The "Thematic Section" represents innumerable hours of labor sorting through and organizing the Biblical material by its various themes. These themes have been set out by a numerical code, the 1000's laying out studies of themes related to God, the 2000's to Jesus Christ, the 3000's to the Holy Spirit, the 4000's to natural phenomena in the Bible (e.g., plants, animals, weather, and the like), the 5000's to people, their bodies, their social and political arrangements, and the like, the 6000's to themes of sin and salvation, the 7000's to God's people throughout the ages, the 8000's to the life of faith, and the 9000's to eschatology. An alphabetical index allows the user quickly to locate the theme/topic of interest to him or her.

On account of these extensive thematic outlines and general index, this volume is a treasure-trove of "theme studies" that might fuel adult Sunday School discussions from now till the Second Coming. It would certainly be a useful tool for learning in short compass what Scriptural texts touch on a given topic or theme that one wishes to study. It should not be treated as comprehensive, however, and the user would do well to complement the use of these thematic outlines with his or her own concordance

studies and reading of dictionary entries on the theme of interest in scholarly reference works (e.g., the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* or the eight volumes that will comprise the *IVP Dictionary of the New Testament* and *Dictionary of the Old Testament*).

The reason for seeking out complementary resources for this Study Bible is twofold. First, despite the explicated purpose of the thematic section to be to allow Scripture to explain Scripture, it is evident that the compiling team's biases at several points enters in to direct how Scripture will explain itself. This is unavoidable in any such enterprise, to be sure, and the user of even the most seemingly objective of reference tools needs to be alert to the ways in which these biases can shape the tool and the study. It must be said up front that the compiling team has done an exceptional job avoiding some obvious denominational/sectarian biases: the thematic section and brief feature articles are outstandingly tolerant of the various positions on infant and believers' baptism and on various views of the millennium, for example. Nevertheless, there are more subtle biases of which one should be wary. For instance, the outlines suggest that codes of purity (clean and unclean things, sources of defilement, and concern for maintaining an undefiled state) are primarily an Old Testament phenomenon. Thus the outlines do not lead the reader to see how important language of "clean" and "unclean," or how potent the threat of "defilement," could be for the formation of Christian ethos and group boundaries. There may be, therefore, a subtle tendency toward stressing more of a disjunction between the ceremonial and ritual aspects of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant than the New Testament authors would have perceived themselves.

The second reason is that one's study of Scripture is enhanced not only by reading Scripture but by immersing oneself in the world of Scripture, that web of social and cultural values and systems within which the Word took shape and had meaning. This Study Bible will not help one enter that world or hear the Word in a manner sensitive to its historical and cultural context, and so the user must supplement its use with other resources designed to cultivate this sensitivity, to attune modern students of Scripture to the foreign culture within which the Word became Flesh. If the framers of the thematic section had done more of this groundwork themselves, they would have, for example, discussed "gratitude" and response to receiving gifts together with the theme of "grace." This would have communicated to modern readers the inseparability of receiving gifts and returning the favor in the ancient (and thus biblical) world.

As long as one is committed to using this Study Bible in the context of different resources, each contributing its particular strength and nuances to one's appreciation of Scripture, one will find the *NIV Thematic Reference Bible* a valuable resource, an excellent *starting point* for engagement with the Scriptures on a given topic. My caveats aside, I am personally grateful for the obvious love for Scripture and diligence in execution evidenced in this volume.

David A. deSilva

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Mark Allan Powell, *Jesus as a Figure in History: How Modern Historians View the Man from Galilee*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1998, 238 pp. \$22.00.

After summarizing admirably the recent study of Jesus, which is awash in viewpoints, methodological discussions, and stalemates, Mark Allan Powell states that,



no matter what these scholars conclude about Jesus, the personal confessions of Christians will go on. Powell calls such confessions the "Jesus of Story" rather than the "Jesus of history" and it is highly appropriate for a confessional Lutheran, such as Powell is, to contend for a view that fundamentally was established at the turn of the century by Martin Kähler, namely, that the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith are distinguishable in how we can know each as well as the significance of each. Though his conclusion surely undercuts any logically-critical theological value of the quest of the historical Jesus, Powell writes here with exquisite clarity and a balance of judgment required of those who want to sketch the current scene for others.

The book contains chapters that introduce and summarize (1, 2, 3, and 10) and also a series of chapter-length summaries and critiques of the most important studies of Jesus of late in English (Jesus Seminar, Crossan, Borg, Sanders, Meier, and Wright). Quickly, and appropriately for a book with this purpose, Powell surveys how we got to where we are today (chp. 1) and then, after a nice clear summary of contemporary methodological debates (chp. 2), Powell delves a little more deeply into some significant books which he has chosen not to analyze in detail (chp. 3: Horsley, Vermes, Smith, Witherington, and Downing). The study of Horsley deserves more treatment than he gives since Horsley's book is comprehensive, innovative and influential - and in some senses anticipates the lines eventually taken by Borg and Wright.

The chapter-long analyses of the major studies are each composed of the following: method, the portrait of Jesus for that scholar, and critique. For each, Powell is balanced and descriptive; his summaries are accurate (and I have read each of the books he reviews); and his critique neither carps nor focuses on minor points. For each he incorporates both what major Jesus scholars have said as well as prominent reviews.

It is hard to review a book that reviews other books but the following points are worthy of attention: first, Powell is fair and accurate. For this reason alone the book will be useful for years to come. Second, because the book is comprehensive, it can serve as a primer on Gospel methodology as well as an introduction to the scholarship in the field. Third, Powell's focus on methodology for each scholar corrects many recent surveys of the field and sets the book apart. Fourth, the syntheses of the final chapter (covering method, Jesus and Judaism, eschatology, politics, the supernatural, and self-consciousness/intention) not only draw the whole book together but also provide an agenda for where students might enter the discussion. If I have one criticism it is that the author chose to select from the modern discussion only those books that were written in English. This leaves out three significant books that operate with different methods and draw different conclusions about Jesus (J. Gnilka, H. Schürmann, J. Becker). A reviewer can hardly give a book a more hearty recommendation.

Scot McKnight, North Park University

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Adolf Schlatter. *The History of the Christ: The Foundation of New Testament Theology*. Translated by Andreas J. Köstenberger. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1997, 426 pages, \$29.99 (hardcover).

Adolf Schlatter (1852-1938) was Professor of NT and Systematic Theology at Tübingen from 1898-1922. This work originally appeared as the first volume of the

author's *Die Theologie des Neuen Testaments* in 1909 with the subtitle *Das Wort Jesu*. The second edition of this work was published in 1920 with the new subtitle of *Die Geschichte des Christus*. Appearing for the first time in English, the present book is a translation from the third edition of the same work published in 1923. The translator's preface explains Schlatter's appeal and contribution as a conservative biblical interpreter and theologian. Schlatter was convinced that biblical exegesis was the only proper foundation for systematic theology. This work on the life and ministry of Jesus is divided into five main parts. Part I on "The Preparation for Jesus' Work" describes the background of the ministry of Jesus with special attention to John the Baptist. Part II on "The Turning Point in Jesus Life" commences with the baptism of Jesus and concludes with Jesus' residence in Capernaum. Part III on "The Offer of God's Grace to Israel" surveys the public ministry of Jesus. Part IV on "Jesus' Way to the Cross" chronicles the rejection of Jesus by his contemporaries and subsequent Passion. And finally, Part V on "The Easter Account" narrates the resurrection of Jesus. Schlatter's method of presentation is a descriptive synthesis of the biblical material which has the character of a Gospel "harmony." The relatively few and brief footnotes are located at the bottom of each page. The book includes a fairly detailed subject index followed by a scripture index.

B. Keith Brewer

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Hans Schwarz. *Christology*. Grand Rapids, Michigan and Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998, 352 pages, \$25.00 (paper).

Following a brief preface and introduction, the book is divided into three main parts. The first main part of the book on "In Search of the Historical Jesus" consists of a single chapter which surveys "The Quest for Jesus" in three sections. The first section discusses Jesus in the eyes of modern reason and includes the Jesus of the Enlightenment, Jesus in the Nineteenth Century, and Jesus according to the Social Gospel. The second section concerns a new look at the sources with presentations on the limits of rational enquiry, analyzing the synoptic material through various methods of biblical criticism, the New Quest for the Historical Jesus, and the continued quest (represented by three groups of German, Scandinavian, and Anglo-American scholars). The third and final section considers the third wave of current Jesus scholarship and discusses the non-eschatological Jesus of Borg, the eschatological but non-apocalyptic Jesus of Witherington, and the emphasis on studying Jesus in context through anthropology, sociology, and cultural analysis.

The second main part of the book on "The Biblical Testimony and Its Assessment Through History" consists of three chapters. Chapter 2 discusses "The History of Jesus" in terms of the life and destiny of Jesus and the proclamation of Jesus. In the first half of this chapter, Schwarz covers the date and place of Jesus' birth, Jesus' descent, the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist, the duration and extent of Jesus' public ministry, the trial and death of Jesus, and the empty tomb and the epiphanies of the resurrected Jesus. In the second half of this chapter, Schwarz considers Jesus and the law, announcing the kingdom, and the messiahship of Jesus. Chapter 3 on "Jesus the Christ" begins with a discussion on the centrality of the resurrection and then looks at the witness of the Synoptic Gospels, the Johannine witness, and the Pauline witness.

Chapter 4 focuses on four stages of christological reflection: (1) the early Church; (2) the Medieval period; (3) the reformation period; and (4) the modern era.

The third main part of the book on "The Relevance of Jesus Christ for Today" consists of three chapters and an excursus. Chapter 5 on "The Human Face of God" discusses bridging the ugly and broad ditch of history, Jesus from the perspective of various Jewish scholars, Jesus' unique relationship to God, and Jesus' self-awareness. Following this chapter is an excursus on "Incarnation, Preexistence, and Virgin Birth." Chapter 6 on "Cross and Resurrection" discusses Jesus' self-interpretation of his death, the salvational significance of Jesus' death, the enigmatic character of Christ's resurrection, the turning point of the resurrection, and a final section on feminist Christologies. Chapter 7 on "Christ's Presence and Future" discusses the descent into hell and the ascension of Christ, the issue of the scope of salvation, the relationship between the kingdom of God and the Church, and the return of Christ. The book concludes with subject, name, and scripture reference indices. The footnotes are generally brief bibliographic references and are located at the bottom of each page.

This well-written book is very comprehensive in scope. However, many prominent names and other matters are left out of the discussion which one would expect at various points: source criticism is not mentioned in connection with analyzing the Synoptic material, Günther Bornkamm in connection with the New Quest for the Historical Jesus, N. T. Wright in connection with the eschatological but non-apocalyptic view of Jesus, and Hans Küng in connection with the scope of salvation, just to name a few items. The author raises the issue of critical historical investigation in his presentation of Jesus but does not fully resolve the challenge to contemporary faith in my opinion. While he is critical of the criterion of dissimilarity, he does not suggest another methodology for determining the authenticity of the Gospel tradition. The third part of the book is the most unique and interesting. In the final analysis, Jesus is, for the author, in the title of a previous work by John A. T. Robinson, "the human face of God." The author draws upon many German sources throughout the discussion.

B. Keith Brewer

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Richard P. Thompson and Thomas E. Phillips, eds. *Literary Studies in Luke-Acts*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1998.

This collection of essays in honor Joseph B. Tyson on the occasion of his retirement from Southern Methodist University is arranged into three broad areas covering the main interests of Tyson's scholarly works: "Luke and Acts within First-Century Judaism, the New Testament and Early Christianity," "Lukan Themes, Characters and Rhetoric," and "Jews, Judaism, and Anti-Judaism in the Lukan Writings and Scholarship." Space constraints prevent even a summary of each essay. Instead, this review will describe one representative essay from each of the three sections of the book.

The essays in the first section cover quite disparate ground in connecting Luke-Acts to its wider socio-historical context. The essays include: "Crucifixion, Qumran, and the Jewish Interrogation of Jesus," by Darrell L. Bock; "The Present State of the Synoptic Problem," by William R. Farmer; "Luke's Sequential Use of the Sayings of



Jesus from Matthew's Great Discourses: A chapter in the Source-Critical Analysis of Luke on the Two-Gospel (Neo-Griesbach) Hypothesis," by David B. Peabody; "The Gospel of Luke in the Second Century CE," by Arthur J. Bellinzoni; "Acts and the Pauline Corpus Revisited: Peter's Speech at the Jerusalem Conference," by William Walker, Jr.; and "Acts 9:1-29 and Early Church Tradition," by John T. Towns. Bock's essay, "Crucifixion, Qumran and the Jewish Interrogation of Jesus," examines early Jewish definitions of blasphemy in order to determine what Jesus' statements at his trial in Mark's Gospel (and by extension Luke's Gospel) would have been considered blasphemous or grounds for bringing Jesus to Pontius Pilate. The article is based on an earlier paper Bock presented which suggested the Temple Scroll as a background for Jesus' trial. Tyson questioned whether an Essene document at Qumran could have been relevant among Sadducees holding a trial for Jesus. In this essay which responds to Tyson's question, Bock argues that other Jewish material presents a picture much like that of the Temple Scroll. Hence, the Temple Scroll can be used to understand how Jesus' statements at his trial could be viewed as both blasphemous and seditious.

There are several helpful essays in the second section dealing with aspects of Luke-Acts and Greco-Roman rhetorical practice, including "John Mark in the Acts of the Apostles," by C. Clifton Black; "Irenic or Ironic? Another Look at Gamaliel before the Sanhedrin (Acts 5:33-42)," by John A. Darr; "Conversion in the Acts of the Apostles: Ancient Auditors' Perceptions," by Charles H. Talbert; "The Place of Jerusalem on the Lukan Landscape: An Exercise in Symbolic Cartography," by Mikeal C. Parsons; "The Rhetorical Character of Luke 1-2," by Philip L. Shuler; "From Enthymeme to Theology in Luke 11:1-13," by Vernon K. Robbins; and "Two Lords" at the Right Hand"? The Psalms and an Intertextual Reading of Peter's Pentecost Speech (Acts 2:14-36)," by David P. Moessner. Darr examines the possible use of irony in Lukan descriptions of Jewish religious leaders in "Irenic or Ironic? Another Look at Gamaliel before the Sanhedrin (Acts 5:33-42)." Darr suggests that the interpretation of Luke's presentation of Gamaliel, and Jewish religious leaders in general, are ironic. Luke is not attempting to place Gamaliel in a positive light. Darr states that, "when viewed in its broader narrative context and subjected to a close reading, the account of Gamaliel before the Sanhedrin proves to be fraught with irony" which calls into question the common laudatory view of this Pharisee (p. 123). Darr's essay is intriguing not just for this specific issue but because he examines other accounts in Luke-Acts that describe encounters with Jewish religious leaders. He suggests that many of those accounts are also ironic in nature. By recognizing the irony present in these accounts, Darr suggests that it is possible to see a more consistent, negative view of the Pharisees in Luke-Acts than some scholars have alleged, who seek Luke's depiction of the Pharisees charitably with the Lukan corpus.

Among the essays in the third section of the book, which include "Redemptive Anti-Semitism: The De-Judaization of the New Testament in the Third Reich," by Susannah Heschel; "Freedom and Responsibility on Scripture Interpretation, with Application to Luke," by Robert C. Tannehill; "The God of Promises and the Jews in Luke-Acts," by Robert L. Brawley; "Can Anything Bad Come out of Nazareth, or Can Luke Think That History Moved in a Line or in a Circle?," by Jack T. Saunders; "Subtlety as a Literary Technique in Luke's Characterization of Jews and Judaism,"

Thomas E. Phillips; and "Believers and Religious Leaders in Jerusalem: Contrasting Portraits of Jews in Acts 1-7," by Richard P. Thompson, most argue that Luke-Acts takes a mixed position towards Jews and Judaism. Jack T. Sanders argues, as he has elsewhere, for a very anti-Semitic reading of Luke-Acts, while Robert Brawley argues for a fairly positive attitude towards Jews in Luke-Acts. The essays in this section show that the debate over the perspective on the mission to the Jews in Luke-Acts is no closer to a consensus.

Richard P. Thompson compares the way Luke depicts Jewish believers and how he depicts Jewish religious leaders in the Acts of the Apostles, in "Believers and Religious Leaders in Jerusalem: Contrasting Portraits of Jews in Acts 1-7." Thompson asserts that little attention has been paid to the narrative function of Jewish believers in Jerusalem, especially in the early part of Acts. The image of the Jewish believers in the early part of Acts is that of faithful Jews. This image is enhanced by speeches of Peter and other speakers, through which the narrator may be implicitly commenting on the preceding events. The unity of the Jewish believers, even in the face of opposition or conflict is linked in the Lukan portrait to the God of the Jews, who blessed the believers with divine presence. Thus, the portrait of the Jewish believers is a positive image of a large number of Jews. The positive characterization of Jewish believers in the early part of Acts suggests that a negative assessment of the Lukan view of the Jews needs to be reevaluated.

This book provides several essays which contribute to Lukan studies particularly in literary analysis of Luke-Acts in its Greco-Roman rhetorical context. Those interested in source-critical issues will find the articles analyzing the Two-Document Hypothesis and defending the Griesbach Hypothesis interesting. Also, those interested in reading theory and reader-response criticism will find several articles, especially those by Tannehill and Brawley, helpful contributions. This book is a welcome contribution to Lukan scholarship.

Kenneth D. Litwak, Trinity College/University of Bristol, England.

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I. Howard Marshall and David Peterson, eds., *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998, xiv + 610 pp., \$36.00.

The continuing fascination of Acts is amply demonstrated by this large volume in which twenty-four scholars contribute papers on various aspects of Luke's thought. Despite the large number of contributions, there is a marked unity of approach, perhaps not unconnected with the fact that while two of the contributors have taught in the University of Aberdeen, no less than ten gained their Ph.D.'s there. Their approach to Acts is universally positive, and there is no tendency to suspect Luke's motives or to compare his work unfavorably with that of Paul. The volume is well produced with good indexes and a helpful abstract at the start of each chapter.

While the essays presumably originate in the research interests of the various writers, the editors have sought to give shape to the book by grouping them under three broad headings: The Salvation of God, asking what Luke means by this central theme, the Call of God, dealing mainly with the preaching in Acts, and The Renewing Work of God, showing how Luke sees the life of the Church as the renewal of Israel in

fulfilment of God's promise. For this reader the most striking conclusion to emerge from the book as a whole is the convergence of Acts with the letters of Paul. Two essays in particular, David Seccombe on 'The New People of God' and Robert Wall on 'Israel and the Gentile Mission in Acts' and 'Paul: A Canonical Approach' make this explicit. Acts functions as a narrative-theological version of Romans 9-11. Indeed a modern editor might fairly have entitled Acts, 'How the Kingdom of Restored to Israel', the answer being seen in the reconstitution of Israel as an inclusive, non-ethnic fellowship extending to the ends of the earth.

Having said that, the book is rather less than the sum of its parts. Interesting though many of the individual contributions are, they do not really add up to a theology of Acts, something that would be better done by a single mind in half the number of pages. Some themes are treated more than once, and others not at all. Despite its length, the book contains no sustained discussion of either Christian baptism or the churches' ministry in Acts, nor, surprisingly, is there anything about the role of women—and yet 540 pages is really more than anyone wants to read on the theology of Acts!

R. Alastair Campbell, Spurgeon's College, London

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Stephen Westerholm. *Preface to the Study of Paul*. Grand Rapids, MI / Cambridge, U.K.: W. B. Eerdmans, 1997. xii + 128 pages, paper, \$13.00 / £8.99.

Westerholm imagines an average modern—he calls him Herbert—whom he sets out to convince of Paul's significance. Assuming that Herbert has no interest in the esoteric matters that so consume the scholars, Westerholm, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at McMaster University, explains what it will take to show Herbert why Paul is so important. The corny device notwithstanding, the tack is to seek to understand Paul and his assumptions within his own world, using the argument of the book of Romans to shape the endeavor, and to bridge the gap to today's western world so we can understand what Paul is "about" and why he is so important.

The book's twelve chapters follow major divisions of the Roman epistle. Westerholm explains Paul's vantage point and seeks to show how and where his views conflict with contemporary assumptions. For example, when explaining Paul's understanding of his divine commission, Westerholm contrasts that with the modern context that "will not admit of 'revelation' from any 'supernatural' source" (p. 3).

In chapter three Westerholm explains that the West's insistence on freedom of individual choice along with the modern abhorrence of any effort to impose one's moral views on others, lead to a public discourse that rejects discussion of "right" and "wrong." This results in the pressure to relegate religion and morality to private spheres. Westerholm deftly charts Paul's understanding of the nature of "sin," growing out of Proverbs and as articulated in Romans 1:18-32. This chapter, and his discussion of Rom 12:1 - 16:27, are marvelous examples of how to develop a biblical approach to ethics. The "good life" is not determined by conformity to some divine law, nor it is a matter of unlimited freedom (as conceived by moderns). Westerholm says that in Paul's theology, "The mark of the good life is its orientation toward the 'good'" (p. 119)—a concept that Westerholm unpacks in careful fashion (pp. 121-125).



For Paul, there is a rightness in how God has created the world, and any attempts to depart from living in harmony with God's intentions constitute "sin" and result in trouble for the sinner and judgment from God. For Paul, "the fundamental sin is the failure to respond appropriately to the Creator of all that is" (p. 29). This explains why Paul objected to homosexual behaviors of men and women: they violate God's intentions for them, namely, that male and female become "one flesh" providing companionship and offspring. Westerholm's description of sexual sin is illuminating: "one is, in effect, seizing the goods of the created order on one's own terms (that is, without the attendant commitment and responsibilities). The distortion is particularly self-evident when sexual gratification is sought with members of one's own sex" (p. 30).

Westerholm's discussion of the need for and nature of justification is masterfully clear and on target (p. 48), as is his explication of Paul's understanding of saving "faith" (which must express itself in appropriate behavior (pp. 54-58). These are examples of how Westerholm explains Paul's key theological themes in ways that are both true to Paul and understandable in modern terms. As another example, when he discusses God's role in human history, Westerholm carefully sets out what he sees as the four classical options (pp. 110-11). After tracing implications, wisely Westerholm avoids what many theologians all too eagerly attempt: to reduce Paul's teaching to a logical system. In good biblical theological fashion, he allows Paul's rough edges to remain, insisting that interpreters retain Paul's emphases undiminished.

It is difficult to imagine anyone who would not profit from this engaging and well-written introduction to Paul's thought and world. Since Romans forms the basis of the engagement, Paul's essential themes emerge. Westerholm has succeeded well in his task of showing moderns what makes Paul tick. This would be a great textbook in a course on the entire New Testament or on the epistles in which only one small volume had to serve to introduce Paul's thought. It could well serve in church settings where adults wanted some serious study in which they could seek to understand and apply the central elements of Paul's thought to the modern world. It can function as a mirror for our culture and help modern, especially Western, Christians see how far its values have deviated from biblical ones. It serves as a corrective to doctrinaire Christians who are more interested in developing a water-tight theological system than in affirming and living under the power as well as the untidiness of this segment of biblical teaching. Above all, it shows what a towering figure in the development of Christian theology Paul is. In other words, "Herbert, you need to read this book."

Bill Klein, Denver Seminary

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Bruce W. Longenecker, *The Triumph of Abraham's God: The Transformation of Identity in Galatians*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998, xiii + 236pp.

This is a very helpful, well-written and well-informed presentation of important aspects of the theology of Paul's letter to the Galatians.

Longenecker begins by reviewing the debate regarding the presence of apocalyptic and salvation-historical theological influences in Paul's theology. On the one hand we have those (like J. C. Beker and J. L. Martyn) who argue that Galatians does not reflect any salvation historical continuity with the history of Israel. On the

other are those (like J. D. G. Dunn and N. T. Wright) who argue that according to Paul's argument Gentiles have now been included in the redemption that God promised to Israel and that, therefore, the theology of the letter builds on a foundation of salvation history.

Although Longenecker sides more with Beker and Martyn he recognizes that the letter reflects both apocalyptic and salvation-historical influences. Apocalyptic influence is seen in the idea of God's invasion into the world and in the suggestion of cosmic warfare between God and the forces aligned against him. Salvation history is seen especially in Paul's indications that in order for salvation to be made accessible to all, God first had to deal with Israel's crisis. As he puts it, "it seems impossible for Paul to envisage God's eschatological redemption in Christ without also articulating how that same event has afforded the long-awaited redemption of ethnic Israel" (177). In fact, "Galatians 3.13-14 and 4.4-5 indicate that divine triumph could not become implemented universally apart from the restoration of ethnic Israel in particular (or at least providing the means for her restoration)" (177). While this reviewer would come down more on the side of Dunn and Wright, the presentation of the issues is very well done and provides an excellent overview of the issues involved in the debate.

For Longenecker the "faithfulness of Christ" is a central theme of the theology of the letter to the Galatians and it therefore plays a key role in the argument of his book. He is one of the most forceful members of the growing group of scholars who argue that expressions such as *pistis Christou* (faith in/faith[fulness] of Christ; cf. Rom. 3:22, 26; Gal. 2:16, 20; 3:22; Phil. 3:9; Eph. 3:12) refer not to believers' faith in Christ (which is referred to by other expressions) but rather to Christ's own faithfulness, seen above all in his faithful obedience unto death on a cross. The faithfulness (or fidelity) of Christ is seen to be the key to the covenant theology of this letter. Christ's righteousness is tied to his faithfulness and that faithfulness is appropriated by others and becomes effective for them by their faith in Christ (see 105-106). Longenecker argues that the issue being debated in Galatia was one of covenant theology: "Although the faithfulness of Christ was recognized by all as the locus wherein covenant relationship between God and his people is securely instituted, the dispute concerned the means whereby others were caught up in that eschatological phenomenon" (106). According to Paul faith is the sole means of inclusion in the covenant relationship between God and his people reestablished through Christ's faithfulness. In this way "Paul is redefining a theology of covenant relationship in a way that severs it from the 'givens' of covenant theology typical of most forms of Early Judaism, where the will and grace of God are inseparable from the law that leads to righteousness" (107).

Longenecker also sees the faithfulness of Christ as a key to the ethics of the letter with Galatians 2:20 serving as a key to the relationship between the two. That verse (when read "I live by the faithfulness of the Son of God") shows that "the life of the faithful Son of God is being lived out within the believer" (114) and Galatians 5-6 is now understood to be an elaboration of that theme, "where the Son of God, whose own faithfulness was expressed in terms of love and the giving of himself, lives continuously in the very existence of Paul" (115).

The faithfulness of Christ also serves as a key to understanding how Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us (3:13): "because of

his faithfulness, the curse that applied to faithless others could be transferred to him, for their benefit" (144).

Although this reviewer is not (or, at least, not yet) convinced that most *pistis Christou* passages should be read in terms of Christ's faithfulness rather than believers' faith in Christ, Longenecker's full exposition of the theology of Galatians from that perspective is extremely stimulating and worthy of careful consideration. He has shown that such an understanding would shed new light on other aspects of the theology of this letter. Many of his insights maintain their validity even if he turns out to be incorrect regarding the precise meaning of those particular phrases.

In the last chapter (not counting the conclusion) Longenecker provides an insightful discussion of Paul's allusions to demonic manipulation on the part of his adversaries and of the relationship between the Spirit and Christian character on the one hand and between Christian character and biblical interpretation on the other. The focus on Christ-like existence as the sign of the Spirit's work and as the prerequisite for proper biblical interpretation is stimulating and insightful.

All in all, this is a very stimulating volume that reflects profound theological analysis and an excellent standard of scholarship. Although I found myself disagreeing at many points along the way, I also found its theses to be consistently well argued and worthy of careful consideration. This is an important book and an indispensable source for all those who are interested in the theology of Paul's letter to the Galatians.

Roy E. Ciampa

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Barth Campbell, *Honor, Shame, and the Rhetoric of 1 Peter*, SBLDS 160. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998. Pp. x + 266. \$39.95 (cloth).

Campbell's 1995 doctoral dissertation presents an analysis of the whole of 1 Peter through two fundamental lenses: classical rhetorical criticism and honor/shame analysis. He finds the underlying situation of 1 Peter to be illumined by the challenge-riposte exchange. The unbelieving society has issued a "challenge" to the Christians living in their midst in the form of slander, insult, and social ostracization. The author counsels the hearers to offer benevolence and virtuous living as the best riposte (rather than returning like for like), with the hope of vindication and a grant of honor in the future. "Peter" assures them of the honor they possess in God's sight in order to take their focus off the dishonor they experience in human society.

Campbell uses the Greek and Latin rhetorical handbooks to diagnose the ways in which the author sustains his *ethos*, arouses the *pathe*, and, of course, creates logical proofs. The exordium (1 Pet 1:3-12) is profitably analyzed according to the topics of encomia, and the remainder of the letter falls into three "arguments" (1:13-2:10; 2:11-3:12; 3:13-4:11), each following the pattern of *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 2.18.28: *propositio*, *ratio*, *confirmatio*, *exornatio*, and *conplexio* (thesis, reason, proof of the reason, embellishment, summary), and a final peroration (4:12-5:14). Along the way, Campbell provides an exhaustive inventory of devices of rhetorical ornamentation employed by the author (alliteration, *homoioptaton*, synonymy, transplacement, and the like). The book concludes with appendices introducing the major rhetorical treatises,



the "semantic field" of honor/shame language in 1 Peter, and a bibliography helpfully divided by subject.

The book succeeds in underscoring the importance of the cultural context of honor and shame for the interpretation of 1 Peter. This analysis has helpfully highlighted the nature of the suffering that is so thematic in 1 Peter, of which "Peter" must now make sense, and to which he must formulate a response. Campbell's sensitivity to this context frequently results in excellent insights into the meaning and rhetorical force of the text. For example, Campbell rightly understands the quotation of Isaiah 40:6-8 in 1 Pet 1:24-25 to relativize the importance of honor granted by human beings when set against the honor granted by God by birth into God's family. Similarly, Campbell correctly criticizes translations of 1 Pet 2:7 that read "to you who believe, he is precious" rather than "honor (*time*, after all), then, belongs to you who believe." Breaking through an astonishing history of bad translations (NASV, RSV, NIV, even the NRSV), Campbell discerns that the author is using these quotations from Jewish Scripture to contrast the destinies of the believers and unbelievers as a result of their response to Jesus. He might have added that this would constitute an argument from the consequences offered to support the course of action "Peter" promotes.

I have a number of reservations, however, about other aspects of Campbell's honor/shame analysis. First, I do not think that the challenge-riposte scheme provides the best model for displaying the dynamics of this situation. That model works well enough in the analysis of exchanges between Jesus and the Pharisees, or between Paul and his rivals, but 1 Peter addresses a quite different situation. The fact that the "public" has already pronounced its verdict of dishonor upon the way of life of the Christians points away from the challenge-riposte scheme and toward a dominant culture's (or majority culture's) use of shaming as a deviancy-control technique, an attempt to pressure deviants (here, the Christians) to fall back in line with the dominant culture's values and accepted behaviors. "Peter's" task is to prevent the audience from making the only response their neighbors would accept, namely returning to "the vain way of life handed down from their ancestors" (1:18; see 4:3-4). Positively, the believers are to live in such a way as disproves the claim being made that attachment to Christ makes one a subversive and vicious person, and the author suggests many specific strategies by which to overturn their neighbors' verdict about their deviancy. But all this moves in a realm quite distinct from the challenge-riposte in which one person or party seeks to gain honor in the eyes of the larger public by putting down or showing up another person of party. Moreover, masters are not challenging the honor of their household slaves when they punish them (p. 144): the challenge-riposte game only happens between equals. John Elliott, with whom Campbell spent "many enjoyable hours ... discussing 1 Peter in his home" (p. vii), is able at least to combine awareness of the deviancy-control dynamics with discussions of challenge-ripotes at the level of individual behavior in his 1994 article ("Disgraced Yet Graced: The Gospel according to 1 Peter in the Key of Honor and Shame," *BTB* 24 [1994] 166-178), and this kind of nuancing (including discussion of the slanderers' motives, which was not to gain honor at the believers' expense) would have enriched Campbell's discussion as well. In light of their obvious connection, it is surprising not to find Campbell interacting with this article, which was available a year before the degree was granted him.

Second, in his zeal to elevate honor and shame in 1 Peter, Campbell falls into the trap of seeing honor and shame everywhere in 1 Peter. For example, "deliverance/salvation" and "baptism" (as vehicle for deliverance from destruction) are properly topics of safety or security (one of the *two* major divisions of advantage in *Rhetorica ad Herennium*), not honor. There is also the cultural context of patronage to consider, which Campbell seems to collapse into honor when he speaks of three gifts as "three honors" in 1:3-12 (p. 184 n. 37) or merges *charis* language into honor language as a synonym for *kleos*, rather than allowing it to bring a different cultural context, namely patronage scripts and relations, into the discourse (pp. 60-62).

With regard to his rhetorical analysis, Campbell certainly displays, contrary to the opinion of those who dismiss rhetorical criticism as a legitimate and helpful approach to New Testament interpretation, the fact that NT texts do develop arguments in ways more than coincidentally similar to the techniques found in the *progymnasmata* and advanced rhetorical handbooks. He is particularly effective at the micro-level in this regard. His discussions of how the author develops and sustains ethos throughout the letter are also quite strong.

An especial weakness is evident in Campbell's treatment of pathos, which is consistently vague. He speaks of the author "arousing pathos" or a passage "contributing to positive pathos," but in many places he fails to name the specific emotion or explain how he recognizes that it would be aroused at this point. Aristotle's detailed discussion of eleven specific emotions and the triggers by which an orator could evoke them does not enter into Campbell's analysis, although there are many places in which one could say "confidence," "favor," "friendship," "enmity," and "emulation" are being aroused *and* connect the topics in 1 Peter with the topics Aristotle lists as typically provoking such emotions in the hearers.

This reader was also often left wishing for deeper, more thorough analysis of the argument. For example, on p. 75 Campbell writes that in 1:20 "confessional material, hymnic or credal, is enlisted in order to support rhetoric." We are not told, however, in what specific ways this material "supports rhetoric" except as adding elegance. There is cause, however, to investigate this further (e.g., does it provide topics of amplification, or perhaps provide an implicit rationale for accepting the course of action proposed by the author?). Similarly, Campbell labels 2:3 a maxim, describing it very technically as an epiphoneme and citing its Septuagintal source. He does not, however, tell us anything about how the maxim contributes to the persuasiveness of the argument (what rationales, implicit or explicit, it might adduce, for example). It is this level of inquiry that best displays the fruitfulness of rhetorical investigations, pressing beyond the task of mere labeling of parts of an argument or ornamental devices employed.

Finally, this reviewer was left with questions about the *argumentatio* pattern that Campbell finds thrice in this letter. The second block (2:11-3:12) fits it best, as the household codes do provide an excellent "embellishment" of the basic proposition concerning giving to each their due. The other blocks, however, seem to be forced into the pattern. Moreover, I would raise questions about the division of the blocks within the *argumentatio* pattern. For example, it is not so clear to me why an embellishment should end in 1:25 and a summary begin in 2:1 (running for ten verses). If one must stick with this pattern, I would prefer to extend the embellishment well into 2:1-10, since, as Campbell admits, this latter section still "develops" notions introduced earlier

(p. 80), rather than providing a summary. I found, then, the macro-level of rhetorical analysis unconvincing: Troy Martin's call for an analysis that clearly delineates the sections of the letter may still remain to be discovered.

In sum, then, the reader of this dissertation will learn much about the importance of honor and shame in the rhetorical strategy of 1 Peter, as well as discover many fine insights into "Peter's" construction of logical argumentation. He or she will also leave with the same sorts of discomfort experienced by many readers of honor/shame analyses that give little attention to the many other cultural values of the first-century world, and of rhetorical analyses that are determined to fit New Testament texts to fixed patterns rather than allow new patterns to emerge as well as caught up more with affixing labels to than determining the specific, strategic contributions of, each part.

David A. deSilva

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Mark Harding, *Tradition and Rhetoric in the Pastoral Epistles*. Studies in Biblical Literature 3. New York/Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1998. Pp. xii + 253. \$48.95.

This monograph is a modification of the author's doctoral dissertation completed in 1993 under the tutelage of the late J. Christiaan Beker at Princeton Theological Seminary. The work is comprised of three chapters, framed by a brief introduction and conclusion. The bibliography is divided into two sections: ancient and modern authors; a subject/author index is likewise included. There is, unfortunately, no index of Scripture passages.

Harding's work is one of the first volumes in a new series from Lang, which "seeks to make available to scholars and institutions scholarship of a high order, which will make a significant contribution to ongoing biblical discourse" (p. ix). While Harding asserts early on (p. 2) that he does not intend to defend the pseudonymity of the Pastoral Epistle's (PE), he makes clear that he is convinced that the letters were not written by Paul. Nonetheless, Harding has a genuine appreciation for the creativity of both Paul and the author of the PE, and he seeks to demonstrate, employing a rhetorical focus, that the "Pastor" was not only a theologian in the Pauline tradition, but also a persuasive and creative communicator of the Pauline heritage to a later generation in a different social context.

Chapter One discusses four different approaches to the PE: 1) Baur and Holtzmann, 2) Defenders of Pauline authorship, 3) Studies in *Traditionsgeschichte*, and 4) J. Christiaan Beker's perspective. The material in the first two sections is probably known to most scholars of the PE, though the summary is helpful. The only author discussed in detail in section 2 is Ceslaus Spicq. The third section will prove very useful for presenting the work of a number of German scholars to an English-language readership. Authors treated are Klaus Wegenast, Norbert Brox, Jürgen Roloff, Peter Trummer, and Michael Wolter. In section 4, Harding concludes by noting three points, on two of which he differs from his mentor: 1) Beker devotes little attention to the social and historical background of the Pauline letters; 2) Beker is aware that sometimes, when normative issues are at stake, Paul suspends contextualization; 3) Beker neglects to evaluate the influence of classical and Greco-Roman rhetoric on Paul. Harding believes that Beker's generally negative judgment of the PE can be modified if one assumes that



the "Pastor" had before him a corpus of ten Pauline letters, not simply the seven undisputed letters.

In Chapter Two, the PE are discussed in terms of the rhetoric of letters. A first section presents Greco-Roman letter theory and types. A second reflects on the PE as Pauline letters, discussing the degree to which they embody Pauline theology and the image they offer of Paul. After considering background on moral exhortation in the Greco-Roman world (section 3), Harding argues that the PE exhibit the characteristics of Greco-Roman letters of moral exhortation (section 4). A final section on the testament genre deals primarily with 2 Tim. Though the testament genre is Jewish, Harding focuses on the aspect of moral exhortation within this letter as well, concluding that the PE fit comfortably into the Greco-Roman and early Jewish traditions of moral exhortation.

Chapter Three treats the PE in conjunction with the rhetoric of speeches, under four headings: 1) Rhetoric in the Ancient World, 2) The PE and the Species of Rhetoric (judicial, deliberative, epideictic), 3) The PE and Aristotle's Three "Proofs" (reason, ethos, pathos), 4) Being Well Disposed: The Pastor and His Audience. Harding wisely eschews the current trend to force NT letters to fit every single element of a judicial, deliberative, or epideictic speech, concentrating instead on how rhetorical elements based on categories derived from oral situations can be used persuasively in written communications. He makes the point, well taken, that a communication can have either an epideictic or deliberative flavor depending on whether the perspective is that of the addressor or addressee.

Harding concludes that the pastor composed literate, effective, persuasive affirmations of Paul and his tradition. Whether or not one agrees with Harding on the pseudonymity of the PE, his study is an important contribution to an appreciation of the PE in their own right.

Veronica Koperski, Barry University

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Peter W. L. Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City: New Testament Perspectives on Jerusalem*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1996. Pp. xiii + 370, \$25.

This work is a systematic attempt to show that the coming of Christ drastically altered OT expectations of Jerusalem at the very outset of the formation of the Christian movement. This is true, Walker argues, throughout the NT corpus, with the exception of a very few documents. The unexpected conclusion of Christ as center, as opposed to Zion as center, places Jerusalem as a primary focus within the NT Christological argument, both in the historical context of the NT and the current era. The NT reflects a community/communities coming to grips with failed political assumptions for Jerusalem and an embrace of God's new missional purpose for God's people in Christ. Walker intends to develop a "biblical theology" (xiii) of Jerusalem that is hinged on the NT interpretation of Christ's life, death, and resurrection in their historical context as well as later interpretive efforts in the corpus.

The book is divided into two parts: Landscapes of Jerusalem (Part I) and Jesus and the Church (Part II). By far the weightier portion, Part I is subdivided into seven chapters each related to specific NT documents, chosen neither for chronological nor canonical order. Rather, Walker chooses texts considered relevant to the discussion,

arranged so that the reader alternates (roughly) between those documents written before 70 and those which were written subsequently? (xiii). Each document is read with respect to its perceived attitudes toward Jerusalem, the Temple, and, in some cases, the Land. Lack of explicit reference to Jerusalem is therefore compensated by perceptions gained from the interrelation of the three. Walker intends that these discussions provide confirming evidence as to how they would have approached Jerusalem . . . ? (xii). The now rejected status of Jerusalem, how much or little that can be related to the life of Jesus or discernment on the part of the NT author, becomes the focus for Walker in his pursuit of a biblical theology in Part II. The NT confronts what is now an age-old question: Is the OT wrong in its prophetic understanding of the future status of Jerusalem? As a result of Christ, NT reinterpretations of the significance of Jerusalem engage this question, coming to terms with the *new* meaning of what it is to be Israel, God's people. It is a Jerusalem "desecrated" (287) that must resign itself to no status in the world; it is God's restoring of God's people in Christ that fulfills OT prophecy, called to missional liberation rather than socio-political glorification (292). A biblical theology of Jerusalem is "therefore illegitimate" (313) without the interpretive contexts of the NT for Christian theology. Continuity in biblical revelation is affirmed as long as one is purposeful in acknowledging the reinterpretive efforts of the NT authors in discerning the ongoing purposes of God combined with the discontinuity of Jerusalem's failed future status as the necessary outcome of God's economy of salvation? (314).

Although at times I find myself in negative reaction to Walker's bold assertions that the NT presents a unified front regarding the "destruction of the formal structures of Judaism" (12), I nonetheless found the book as a whole provocative in its application. Walker rightly calls Christians to an unapologetically Christian attitude of repentance as the framework for an appropriate biblical theology, i.e. a theology that necessitates the interpretive lens of the NT with utmost "humility and self-critique" (316). In addition, Walker has effectively shown a unified perception of a changed Jerusalem within the texts under consideration. Whether or not the specific means of each NT document to explain this change produces a unified theological perspective for modern application is not sufficiently clear, if indeed truly possible. The valuable aspect of this work, however, is its assertion that the Christological debate must be acutely aware of its dependence on the notion of a Jerusalem changed.

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Arland J. Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids and Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2000. xxix + 522 pp.

This volume inaugurates a wide-ranging series of books entitled "The Bible in Its World." It is the most substantial work on the parables to appear in a decade and arguably the most useful. Hultgren is professor of New Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, and reflects a centrist position across the critical spectrum. A brief, introductory chapter defines parables and their distinctives and debunks the false disjunction between parable and allegory. The next seven chapters that comprise the commentary proper classify the parables, somewhat artificially, into those that reveal God, exemplary stories, parables of wisdom, those that portray life before God, parables

of final judgment, the most allegorical of Jesus' parables, and remaining parables of the kingdom. A very short ninth chapter sums up the distinctives of the Synoptists as interpreters of Jesus' parables, while a tenth chapter treats the unparalleled parables in Thomas. (Paralleled versions are commented on briefly in conjunction with their canonical parallels.) Three appendices discuss the purpose of the parables according to the evangelists, the triad of stories in Luke 15 and why to translate *doulos* as slave rather than servant. Ample bibliographies appear at the end of the discussion of each parable, and a select, general bibliography precedes the indices in rounding out the volume.

Within the treatment of each passage, Hultgren provides his own translation of every version in the Synoptics and Thomas. He then provides, in turn, notes on the text and translation, exegetical commentary (verse-by-verse or section-by-section), and a succinct but always insightful "exposition" that combines timeless principles and contemporary application. For some passages an extra section on "general comments on the text" appears before the running commentary to discuss particular difficulties of overall interpretation or questions of authenticity or literary dependence. Whenever there is more than one canonical version of a text, Hultgren gives separate though often overlapping commentaries on each version.

In almost every instance, Hultgren's exegetical decisions match my own (*Interpreting the Parables* [Downers Grove: IVP, 1990]). He opts for a little more redactional freedom for the evangelists to append inauthentic material than I would and is a little quicker to label doubtful parallels as genuine ones (e.g., the Talents and Pounds), but generally supports the authenticity of the canonical parables and recognizes the largely dependent, later, Gnostic nature of Thomas. He does not reflect methodologically on how to accept the limited amount of allegory present in the parables without returning to pre-twentieth-century excesses, but the actual main points that he finds—often two, three or four—in a given passage normally reflect their central thrusts quite accurately.

Hultgren has read enormously widely and interacted with a wealth of scholarship on every parable, while remaining firmly historical-critical in his approach. Influential but idiosyncratic treatments of recent years like those of Herzog and Hedrick are largely rejected. The only place where he goes into unusual exegetical detail is with twelve arguments defending the view that the Sheep and the Goats (Matt. 25:31-46) refers to all the needy of the world with its references to "the least of these my brothers." Hultgren's expositions readily betray his Lutheran heritage of the superiority of grace to law and its modern, more liberal modification, as he often includes provocative suggestions about God's work among those who are not consciously Christian.

The typescript is remarkably free of errors. I noted only a very few minor typos in the footnotes and bibliography and only one in the text itself: Mark 4:28 is listed as 2:28 on p. 387 in the first sentence of the discussion about the disputed Qumran Cave 7 fragment, so that the uninitiated could become very confused as to why this discussion is appearing here. The only thing remotely approaching a factual error that I observed was the reference to positive uses of leaven appearing only in later rabbinic literature (p. 406), when in fact already Leviticus 23:17 commands that one of the Israelites' sacrifice should use leaven. Because of the commentary nature of the book, it has no unifying thesis or sustained argument. Only the very dedicated are likely, therefore, to



read it straight through. But as a reference work for scholar, pastor and theological student alike, it will prove to be a rich storehouse of insights.

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Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, NICNT. Hardcover, pp. xcii & 928, \$50.

What is a commentary for, and what should it do? The answer given to that question will, I suspect, determine the extent to which the reader will find Green's commentary to be of value.

Unlike many commentaries, Green neither discusses what Christian sources may lie behind Luke's written text, nor how a comparison of Luke with other Gospels may be of value. His focus is on the final form of Luke's text, and his reading of that text assumes and supports the claim of its author – whose identity is unimportant for the interpretation of his text – to have composed a narrative which is an orderly account. This narrative Green classifies as historiography, although questions of historicity are left to one side. Luke is a theologian, and his purpose is not to show what happened but to show how events are used by God to fulfill his purposes. Jesus is the main character in the narrative, but it is God who controls the story and it is salvation which is the "pervasive coordinating them" of the work. Salvation which

embraces the totality of embodied life, including its social, economic and political concerns. For Luke, the God of Israel is the Great Benefactor whose redemptive purpose is manifest in the career of Jesus, whose message is that this benefaction enables and inspires new ways for living in the world (p.25).

Thus the text cannot be read solely in terms of itself; a narrative approach is necessary but not sufficient to comprehend it. The narrative must be read both in the light of texts that stand behind it – particularly the Septuagint – and in the light of the cultural environment of both Jesus (Palestine) and Luke (the wider Greco-Roman world). Social-scientific approaches to New Testament study inform Green's reading, and this interest in how the text came across to first century readers gives it a pastoral dimension enabling theological application today.

Green's critical assumptions are mainstream, and he divides the Gospel along conventional lines. The English text presented is the NRSV (sometimes modified) and general comments are made first on each section, followed by discussions of a few verses at a time. This enables Green's readers to remain focused on the actual text of Luke, and to keep a good grasp on his overall picture. This is helpful for anyone seeking the bigger picture and a welcome corrective to over-atomized readings which fail to convey a coherent impression of the Gospel as a whole. Yet it is not without its frustrations. Amendments to the NRSV text are noted, but Green does not provide any discussion as to why he disagrees with it. Nor perhaps does he pay due attention to the fact that previous scholarship has historical-critical questions which might be ignored in a literary reading of the text but which cannot be ignored by either the pastor or the student.. With respect to the much belabored question of the date of the census, for example, Green acknowledges the difficulties in a sentence, and in a footnote refers the reader elsewhere. This is fine of course; but there seems to be something missing when

he goes on to suggest that the reference to the census functions to place the story of Jesus in the context of "the world", yet chooses not to engage with the problems that this claim to participation on a world stage raises. If Luke's perceived intention is to carry value, then surely the means of achieving this intention are important. This is neither an inexpensive nor a small book, but to address some of the questions that he has the reader needs to turn elsewhere.

This of course is to question Green only because he does what he sets out to do, viz. to leave aside "the whole spectrum of questions that might possibly be put to the Gospel of Luke". Both its strength and its weakness, Green's work is one particular reading of the text rather than a commentary which compares and evaluates possible interpretations before defending its own. On its own terms it should be considered a success, for it is readable, engaging and stimulating throughout. More accessible than traditional historical-critical commentaries perhaps, it seems better to think of it as a complement to rather than a replacement of worthy forerunners who have undertaken to compile a commentary on Luke's narrative of the God who brings about his salvation in the career of Jesus and those who follow him.

Perhaps one further issue arises from Green's narrative approach to the Gospel of Luke, a question of omission rather than of commission. The Gospel, argues Green, is only the first of two volumes, and it ought to be read in the light of its sequel. Thus there is a sense in which Green's reading stands incomplete. Those who profit from this volume would profit also from how Green's insights into Luke's former volume might be complemented and expanded by a similar engagement with those of Luke's second.

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Francis Moloney, *The Gospel of John*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1998.

Francis Moloney has already made a number of significant contributions to the field of Johannine studies, most notably a trilogy of books working their way through the gospel. His work, conducted from an explicitly narrative-critical perspective, is brought together and built upon in this commentary. It will be the presentation of a commentary from this explicit perspective that justifies its addition to the ever-growing number of commentaries on the Gospel according to John.

Moloney's introduction is mercifully brief covering issues of dating (the end of the first century), authorship (equivocal, with John Zebedee not quite ruled out but unlikely), background, relationships with the other Johannine material in the New Testament and a section dealing with the meaning of the term 'Jews' in the gospel. All of this is handled with suitable caution and acknowledgment of alternative positions, though one wonders whether pointing to the way in which the story of God and his son and the challenge to all who would follow is sufficient to account for the authority of the Gospel.

The narrative perspective is also introduced and defended in the introduction to the commentary and Moloney's comments on the variety of approaches to the Gospel as well as his comments on the narrative approach are valuable. The focus of the commentary is on the world in the text and Moloney asks how the story has been designed and told in order to influence the world in front of the text. He is alive to the

pitfalls of such a process and in a balanced discussion points out the responsibility of the critic to not lose sight of the world behind the text. Historical issues are not left behind and frequently the reader of the commentary is pointed to further helpful discussion of such questions in addition to Moloney's own comments. The focus of the commentary, however, remains firmly on issues such as the literary shape of each section of the story, the connections between the various elements of the story, the roles of characters and the underlying point of view of the author. Moloney also includes a helpful discussion on the nature of the reading process in general and the role of the implied reader in particular. However, having said this Moloney finally states that his concern is with today's reader of the text albeit based upon an awareness of the emerging reader in the text. The commentary attempts to 'create a meeting of horizons among the worlds behind the text, in the text and in front of the text' (20).

As soon as the wealth of secondary literature dealing with all three of these horizons in Johannine studies is considered one can only be appreciative for the depth of reflection upon, and judicious treading through, this jungle. At the same time the goal of interpreting the details of the text is not lost and is conducted in the light of the larger narrative picture.

All the major issues within Johannine studies are addressed and, while not every conclusion will be agreed with, Moloney's conclusions are passionately argued and will take their rightful place in the ongoing debate and discussion concerning this enigmatic Gospel. Much of the exposition will be familiar for readers of the previous three volumes on John but the format of the commentary has allowed for considerable detail to be added on specific verses as well as the more technical discussion one would expect.

The Sacra Pagina format seems to be well suited to such an approach. Each section of the treatment of the text begins with the author's translation. Then follows a long interpretative section where the flow of the passage and its interpretation is outlined. The discussion then is concluded with notes on specific verses, justifying translation choices made, pointing the reader to outside studies and alternative views and providing pertinent historical detail.

In his introduction, Moloney comments on the way that the story is told so as to address the religious and cultural maelstrom of Asia Minor at the end of the first century. This emphasis on the first century reception and its variety is an insight that could have been more generously reflected in the body of the commentary itself.

One wonders also about the form of commentaries on the Gospel of John in particular and those undertaken from literary approaches in general. I feel that this commentary could have benefitted from some brief essays on both literary and theological topics which may have helped to more explicitly integrate material and themes. This might have helped readers relatively new to narrative approaches appreciate better the methodology and results as well as given Moloney further opportunity to help the reader of his commentary benefit from his theological insight into the text.

Is there a format capable of dealing adequately with the three horizons that Moloney sets out (rightly) to address? That Moloney has succeeded as well as he has in this volume places scholars and preachers on the Gospel according to John considerably in his debt.

Bill Salier



C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. Vol. 2: *Introduction and Commentary on Acts XV-XVIII*. ICC. Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1998, cxx+704 pp., \$69.95.

The second of half of Barrett's magisterial work on Acts maintains the same standard of erudition and depth of exegetical insight which has consistently marked the work of this consummate practitioner of the historical-critical method. As we begin the twenty-first century, Barrett will succeed Cadbury and Lake, Haenchen, and Bruce as the standard of reference in the English-speaking world for the exegesis of Acts.

After a five page addition to his bibliography (with abbreviations) and a reproduction of his very helpful map of the eastern Mediterranean world, the author delivers on his promise in his first volume and gives us a 120 page full introduction. After detailing his eclectic approach to textual critical matters in Acts, Barrett supplements his previous discussion of the literary sources to Acts 1-14 with a thorough consideration of the "we passages." Consistent with his mainly negative assessment of Acts' accuracy in representing Paul's thought and actions, Barrett concludes the "we passages do not indicate authorial participation but the use of a basic itinerary source. In a large section on "Acts as a Historical Document," the author assesses the quality of the historical narrative in Acts and in the process answers all the basic questions of introduction. In sum, Barrett considers the author of Acts a second or third generation Christian (not Luke the traveling companion of Paul) writing from within the Jewish/Gentile Christian consensus achieved after the fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70). He believes the author of Acts displays an unconscious tendency to present inaccurately the church of Paul's day as harmoniously solving its problems, whereas it actually lived with many unresolved tensions. Writing in the eighties or nineties to church leaders the author of Acts, then, presents the ideal period of the church for emulation.

Sections on "Acts in History" - a history of interpretation including a description of how Acts achieved canonical status - and "The Theology of Acts" round out the introduction. His history of interpretation is helpful, though it manifests Barrett's reluctance to embrace much of the more recent socio-rhetorical analysis of Acts. He believes sociological analysis is really historical study and rhetorical analysis will not be meaningful since Acts' speeches are too short. As to Acts' theology, Barrett considers Luke's main contribution to be a theological understanding of Christian history, especially Christian mission. In the main, he finds Luke's theology practical though unreflective and lacking in profundity.

In the body of the commentary, each commentary unit contains the writer's English translation; a list of bibliography, mainly periodical articles and essays; an introduction to the unit as a whole and then a verse-by-verse, even word-by-word or phrase-by-phrase, commentary on the Greek text. Following his longstanding practice inspired by his Durham forebear J.B. Lightfoot, Barrett uses no footnotes but incorporates all primary and secondary references into the text itself.

Barrett's translation stands midway between idomatic and formal correspondence. His introduction to each commentary unit discusses literary structure and analysis, then considers sources, the historicity of the content and finally Luke's theological purposes.

The commentator's assessment of these matters stands squarely in the mainstream of the historical-critical method, building on its "assured results." The ample space allotment means that the verse-by-verse commentary sections give consistent attention to the full range of exegetical concerns: text-critical, grammatical and literary, lexical and historical, and theological. No issue of even minor importance for a full and precise understanding of Acts escapes Barrett's exacting hold on matters ancient and modern.

This work is less than fully serviceable because it consistently quotes non-English ancient and modern sources in the original without translation. Further, it speculatively reconstructs first century church history, particularly Paul's encounter with the Jerusalem church, at those points where Barrett believes that Luke has presented Paul as a law-faithful, instead of a law-free, Jewish Christian (Acts 15 and 21; pp. 711, 1000-01). Overall, however this commentary is the premier technical commentary on Acts. It surpasses all English language predecessors in primary source documentation and thoroughness of exegetical discussion.

William J. Larkin, Columbia Biblical Seminary and School of Missions

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Luke Timothy Johnson, *Reading Romans: A Literary and Theological Commentary*. Reading the New Testament. New York, NY: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1997. Pp. xii + 224. \$24.95.

This commentary appears in a series designed to present "cutting edge research in popular form" to an audience that includes upper-level undergraduates, seminarians, seminary-educated pastors, educated laypersons, graduate students, and professors. The focus is on a close reading of the text in its final form, with a concern to grasp large thought units and how they relate to the author's thought as a whole.

The focus of Johnson's reading of the text is that God is one and God is fair. Paul's experience is regarded as uniquely paradoxical, and his intelligence as likewise unique in the first Christian generation. This combination enabled Paul to push beyond the problem of God's righteousness "to the very edge of its mysterious heart, enabling him to assert in one breath the universality of God's will to save humans and the particularity of God's way of bringing that about" (p. 17).

From a literary perspective, Johnson suggests five relevant characteristics: 1) Romans is a real letter, arising from actual circumstances of Paul's life; 2) it is also a scholastic diatribe, indicating Hellenistic influence; 3) it is a midrash, manifesting Jewish identity; 4) it is a Christian writing, assuming a common identity and shared understanding; 5) it is a Pauline writing. While Johnson posits a Pauline school, already operative in the apostle's lifetime, as being involved in the composition of the letter, "there is no doubt that a single imagination 'authored' this letter, in the sense of generating its vision and directing its argument" (p. 16).

In most instances, Johnson accepts a "both/and" rather than an "either/or" approach: the reality of grace as gift does not exclude its transforming power in human freedom; Rom 5 and 8 are as central to Paul's argument as Rom 3 and 7; the purpose of the letter is practical, to raise funds for Paul's anticipated mission to Spain, but this necessitates a detailed theological exposition of the gospel which Paul aims to proclaim on this missionary journey; the letter consists of both theology and moral instruction.

Notable exceptions include his insistence on the uniqueness of Jesus as son of God (pp. 85-86) and his contention of the subjective genitive interpretation of "faith of Christ" with the concomitant assertion that faith is equivalent to obedience (*passim*).

While I strongly agree with the first of the two latter assertions and just as strongly disagree with the second, the attempt to argue such issues within the confines of a popular treatment is somewhat inconclusive, given the voluminous secondary literature; this raises the wider question of whether one can indeed ignore the secondary literature. In a previous book in this series, on the Johannine epistles and gospel, Charles Talbert had forewarned readers not to expect much citation of secondary literature, in view of the goals of the series. Johnson's work seems to engage in much more reference to secondary literature, and the series practice of including these references in the body of the work somewhat diminishes the ease of reading one might expect in "popular form."

Additionally, it might have been helpful if Johnson had made clear from the outset what he considers to be "the author's thought as a whole." Frequently the disputed Paulines are cited in support of an argument, although occasionally an awareness is displayed that the case could be better made by restricting argumentation to the evidence of the undisputed letters (e.g., p. 105). When citing the latter, however, Johnson frequently works them into the discussion well (e.g., citations from the Corinthian correspondence on pp. 82, 84-85, 96-97, 104-105, 198), and the writing style is clear and lively, if occasionally patronizing (e.g., p. 74: "It is sometimes amusing . . .", p. 78: "the present-day reader may need reminding . . .", p. 98: "the reader will recall, I hope . . .").

Johnson does well in giving current examples to illustrate Paul's thought (e.g., p. 110). However, he is at his best in addressing the contemporaneous context of problematic issues, as in the discussions of homosexuality (pp. 34-35), slavery (pp. 100-102), Paul's purpose in Rom 9-11 (pp. 140-43), and obedience to civil authorities (185-91).

Veronica Koperski

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Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament 6. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998. Pp. xxi + 919. \$48.95.

The series in which this commentary appears offers no apologies for its confessional evangelical approach, rightly noting that no commentator approaches the biblical text free of theological assumptions. Nonetheless, a commitment is expressed to do justice to the biblical text even when it does not support traditional opinions.

The treatment does not claim to be exhaustive, though the intention is to interact with current scholarly literature and to provide detailed discussion of theological issues when warranted. A calculated effort is made to treat exegetical questions in relation to the thrust of the argument as a whole.

In all of these respects, this commentary admirably fulfills the intention of the series. While one might not agree with all of Schreiner's exegesis, he clearly makes an effort to be faithful to the text, and he is careful to distinguish exegetical conclusions from apologetic (see, e.g., pp. 292-93) or hermeneutical (p. 96) concerns.



The commentary is definitely "user-friendly," including indices of Scripture and Ancient writings, Author and Subject, and Greek Words, as well as an extensive bibliography. All Greek and Hebrew is translated, and transliterated with sufficient frequency for the non-specialist to follow the discussion for the most part, though there are some discussions of the nuances of syntactic structure that require at least basic familiarity with Greek (e.g., p. 274). Each section is introduced by a summary section, shaded for emphasis, followed by "Exegesis and Exposition," with textual notes at the end. More technical discussion occurs in the footnotes, while scholarly support for and against a given position is indicated within the body of the text, in parentheses where appropriate. Schreiner's own translation opens the "Exegesis and Exposition" sections and sometimes he chooses to translate in such a way as not to follow the textual variant he has argued for in the textual notes (see, e.g., p. 266 on Rom 5:11). Also sometimes the presentation of the line of thought differs from the textual argument (pp. 234, 239).

While fewer scholars today than previously dispute the integrity of Romans 16, Romans 16:25-27 is not as universally accepted. Nonetheless Schreiner contends that the extant letter to the Romans in its entirety was written by Paul as one letter to a mainly Gentile congregation between 55 and 58 A.D. Romans is viewed by Schreiner as having had several purposes, but one overarching theme, the glory of God. This commentary is valuable for the manner in which it pulls together arguments on both sides of disputed issues. One has the general impression that the author is attempting to be as fair as possible even in presenting opinions with which he does not agree.

Schreiner does not appear to have changed his mind on most of the major issues of Pauline interpretation for which he has argued previously. In opposition to Dunn, Schreiner maintains an exegesis of Romans 1:3-4 which assumes the preexistence of Jesus. While recognizing that passages such as these lack the precision of later christological formulas, he nonetheless stresses that they were the "raw materials" from which later formulations developed (see also pp. 31, 38, 41-72). The influence of E.P. Sanders is apparent in Schreiner's expression of respect for the Old Testament and Judaism in a number of places (see, e.g., pp. 129, 138, 170, 204-5, 217, 471, 692-93), as well as in his recognition of Paul's Jewish background (pp. 280, 306, 635-37, 672, 674-75, 756-58).

On the question of the law, Schreiner continues to reiterate that Paul's problem is not with the law itself, but that no human being is capable of fulfilling all the demands of the law without the assistance of the Spirit (371-92); also, the old covenant is viewed as temporary (e.g., p. 142). The ability to keep the law as a result of God's sending of the Spirit is a notion already present in the OT and in Second Temple Judaism (p. 143).

Because of the presence of the Spirit, Schreiner contends, it has now become possible for Christians to keep the law and do good (but not autonomous) works and thereby be saved (pp. 145, n. 10, 154, 395-429); some Jews under the old covenant were able to keep God's law with the assistance of the Spirit (p. 165, n. 2). In opposition to scholars such as Räisänen, Schreiner argues convincingly for Paul's consistency (see esp. pp. 133-34, 148, 163-64, 206-8), and likewise in favor of a subjective genitive interpretation of B/VJ4H D4FJ@á (pp. 72, 181-86, 206, 236) in opposition to a currently strong trend).

Methodologically, Schreiner expresses caution in regard to a thoroughgoing rhetorical approach to the letter, since, he points out, even if Paul did employ a

rhetorical category, he did not do so rigorously. Schreiner suggests that in the absence of indubitable evidence regarding possibly traditional material, it is best to interpret such material in the context of the letter (pp. 40, 184, 243), a principle Gordon Fee has stressed in regard to Phil 2:5-11.

Schreiner sometimes espouses a "both/and" approach (e.g., pp. 60, 63-68 [a reversal of his earlier opinion], 75, 77, 245, 276, 291-92 with 466, 305). He hesitates to appeal to Romans 3:1-8 as a primary text for understanding Paul's view of righteousness, since this is a particularly difficult text (p. 69). Schreiner expresses agreement with Silva that in the case of ambiguous phrases the preferred interpretation is the one that adds least to the meaning of the text (p. 72).

While Schreiner appears to generally accept a broad Pauline corpus, he sometimes displays an awareness that too much reliance on the disputed Paulines does not constitute convincing argumentation if there is no strong support for a position in the undisputed Paulines (pp. 4, 185 n. 12; on the other hand, see p. 172 n. 17).

Structurally, Schreiner views Romans 5-8 as a unit, with the unifying theme being hope (pp. 246-52), but he also comments that faith is sometimes indistinguishable from hope (p. 237), and that peace and reconciliation are different ways of describing the same reality (p. 252); peace and hope are consequences of righteousness (p. 253).

It seems to me Schreiner's commentary raises two major issues, both relating to the hermeneutical implications of biblical exegesis. The first has to do with how far we should go in deriving practical applications from texts that are disputed and difficult to interpret. For example, Schreiner's discussion of the wrath of God presents a picture of an angry God who propitiates his own anger through the death of Jesus (see, e.g., pp. 88-91, 97, 166, 191-92, 197-98); however in the wider context of the undisputed Pauline corpus, a number of scholars (evangelical and otherwise) have maintained that Philippians 2:5-11 depicts God, revealed in Jesus, as one whose nature it is to empty oneself in love for the sake of others, and the free choice of Christ in so doing is stressed. Schreiner seems to be approaching such a position on p. 259, in the statement "These verses [Rom 5:6-11] emphasize the priority of God's love, for he [sic] died for those who are 'weak,' 'ungodly,' 'sinners,' and 'enemies.'" The discussion goes on to emphasize the generosity of Christ. However the statement is made that "God not only planned when Christ would die but also had in mind the people for whom his death would be effective. Again the emphasis is on the greatness of God's love for his people" (p. 160). While this helps to balance the notion of the wrath of God toward sinful human beings, it does not portray a very attractive picture of what God demands of Christ; nor does it make clear why such a demand is necessary. Does not the passage from Philippians at least somewhat nuance the notion of a God who is so concerned with his own glory? Where there is some evidence in the New Testament itself to balance an interpretation such as that of the God of wrath demanding propitiation, perhaps more caution is in order. In his influential book *Jesus* (1981) Edward Schillebeeckx deals with the question of how the modern believer comes to terms with the scandal of Jesus' death, and in so doing he cautions that attempts to be too precise may ultimately be harmful:

Being precise about an event that is a mystery always impoverishes it and so stands on the edge of the precipice of heretical misrepresentation. This is the more true because we are faced here with a violent death. There is

no getting away from the fundamental aspect of negativity, particularly inherent in such a death, especially as this actually entails a rejection of Jesus' life *qua* message. This situation calls of course for religious interpretation *or* a verdict of pure non-sense . . . For us the death of Jesus is, after all, a question put to God -- to the God whom Jesus proclaimed. That Jesus identified with all oppressed and outcast people is quite obvious from the analysis of his message, preaching, beatitudes and whole way of life. Can we suppose that it was actually God himself who set him through his trial and execution among the oppressed and outcast, thus to make his solidarity with the oppressed a *de facto* identification. Or is such a view not rather a blasphemy, in that it ascribes to God what the course of human wrong and injustice did to Jesus? (*Jesus: An Experiment in Christology*, Hubert Hoskins, trans. [New York: Random House 1981], pp. 319; see also all of pp. 273-318.)

A second issue concerns the degree to which Christians today feel bound to conform their practice to that of the biblical writers even when the results of exegesis are relatively undisputed. In his discussion of homosexuality, commenting on Romans 1:24-32, (pp. 92-101) Schreiner rightly criticizes exegetical approaches which attempt to derive some support of the practice of homosexuality from the canon. He also notes (p. 97) that exegetes such as Victor Furnish, while agreeing from an exegetical perspective that the canon does not support homosexuality, nonetheless contend that Paul's view on homosexuality is no longer acceptable, since it was based on a limited understanding. For Schreiner, Paul is authoritative regardless. When Christian exegetes of such stature disagree on such a major issue as the normative dimension of the canon, this perhaps suggests that the ideas of biblical inspiration and inerrancy are in need of some serious discussion.

Veronica Koperski

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V. George Shillington, *Believers Church Bible Commentary: 2 Corinthians*, Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1998, 336 pp., \$19.99.

This is a welcome addition, on a difficult book, to an interesting commentary series. The Believers Church Bible Commentaries are among the most useful of medium-sized commentaries because they adopt an unusual structure. They provide an overview of a major section of the text, here for example, chapters 1 to 9. Then they take the component parts of that section, so we have 1:1 – 2.13 and again we have an overview, this time followed by an analysis ['outline'] and then each part of the outline is examined with a preview, closer analysis and explanatory notes. So the reader is led from the wider perspective to the details and is able to see the details in the context of the broader argument. The study of the details of the text is then followed by two further sections: the text in its Biblical context, where the themes are related to their treatment elsewhere in the Bible, and the text in the life of the Church, where we hear how Christians in the past have understood and applied it. This is briefer than might be expected and majors on comment from the Anabaptist tradition. Shillington is not uncritical of his Anabaptist forebears [236-37] nor does he ignore the magisterial reformers but this engagement with the past is often illuminating.



One of the major questions is about the integrity of this book. Shillington argues that chapters 10-13 are a different letter from chapters 1-9. He calls them a letter of defence and a letter of reconciliation, respectively. He also argues that 6.14-7:1 is an insertion, probably not by Paul, but inserted into Paul's appeal when Paul's letters were collected together many years after the apostle's death. The reason for the insertion was 'to balance Paul's unrestricted vision of reconciliation (5:18-21) with covenant theology' and its place for law [156]. The passage echoes the concerns of the letter of James [280-81]. Some readers may prefer the view that the evidence against Paul's writing this passage is not conclusive. The apostle himself adds moral qualifications [see e.g. Margaret Thrall's ICC commentary]. But Shillington's points are well worth weighing.

In the introduction, among other things, the writer demonstrates different forms of rhetoric employed in the letter and this becomes a helpful tool in understanding the shape and force of the major sections. He also identifies some of the principal theological themes – 'theology born in the crucible of opposition'. In all his arguments Shillington writes with grace and courtesy and he resolves several complicated passages but he refuses to speculate where the evidence is absent. So for example in 3:16-18 Paul 'transposes the narrative [of Ex 34:34] into a principle of conversion operating in his mission among the Gentiles'. '[T]he Lord to whom Moses turned... is the Spirit of Christ, who gives life to all who turn to Christ now.' And the freedom of v.17 is the boldness of the previous verses. The paragraph reaches 'a grand melodic finale' in v.18. On the perils in Asia in 1:8-11 and the events of 1:16-17 he refuses to guess. 'Our hearing [of Paul's language]... should be guided primarily by the forms of the language in the text, not by a critical reconstruction of data beyond the text' [43]. The book is completed by fourteen short essays on various topics from the integrity of the letter, the collection, the super-apostles and the use of scripture.

Readers may not agree with all the judgments expressed but they will profit from the profound wrestling with the text which is expounded with a lightness of touch and warm spirituality.

Arthur Rowe

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Michael W. Holmes. *1 and 2 Thessalonians*. The NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998. 302 pp.

Pastors who spent a fortune on books before leaving seminary only to find that their investment pays poor dividends when it comes time to sermon preparation may be wary of yet another commentary series. But this volume in the NIV Application series is well worth its price.

Michael Holmes gives us a clear, up-to-date, and concise evangelical introduction to the content of the Thessalonian letters, but much more, he succeeds in offering a number of ideas about how the texts can be preached today.

Each passage in the letters is discussed under three headings: Original Meaning, Bridging Contexts, and Contemporary Significance. Most serious commentaries focus solely on the first area. Hermeneutical textbooks typically consider the issues of the second, discussing what lasting principles (if any) can be found in the text. Ethicists and

popular books dwell on the third, often without paying enough attention to the first. Holmes succeeds in bringing all three together with coherence and sensitivity.

Holmes' strong homiletical interest has not kept him from taking the time to do his homework. His annotated bibliography of commentaries and other books on the Thessalonian letters reveals wide reading and a solid foundation of research which informs his judgments and makes his footnotes genuinely helpful.

Holmes argues for the authenticity of 2 Thessalonians. His description of the pseudonymous view as holding the letter to be a 'fake' is unnecessarily polemical. He rightly finds Wanamaker's arguments for dating our 2 Thessalonians before 1 Thessalonians unconvincing.

I was particularly impressed with the wisdom and skill with which Holmes manages to emphasize the positive teachings of the letters without becoming bogged down in eschatological debate. His reading of 1 Thess. 4-5 and 2 Thess. 2 is post-tribulational, respectful and generally eirenic. He knows and fairly presents the interpretative options. I was also struck by Holmes' honesty; he knows when to say that we simply lack enough evidence to be definite (e.g. on the identity of the 'restrainer' in 2 Thess. 2.6f).

Every commentary has weaknesses and this one is no exception. The space given to bridging and homiletical material inevitably displaces discussion that could have addressed exegetical difficulties in the text in greater detail. This is particularly apparent in the 'darker' passages in 2 Thessalonians which speak strongly of retribution and eternal destruction (1.8-9), and of God sending a delusion so that people believe the lie (2.11). The latter passage in particular raises important questions that need more explanation than brief reference to God's judgment in Romans 1 as a parallel. But this is a minor quibble, and Holmes is not alone in this regard.

This is a commentary that should be helpful to a wide variety of readers, although those seeking to do deeper critical and exegetical study will be better served by Best, Bruce, Wanamaker, etc., who are devoted to the latter purpose.

Michael B. Thompson, Ridley Hall, Cambridge

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George H. Guthrie, *Hebrews: The NIV Application Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998, 468pp., \$24.99.

Both pastors and scholars will find this volume a very valuable addition to their libraries. Zondervan's NIV Application Commentary series has the avowed purpose of explaining both the original meaning and contemporary significance of the Biblical text (p. 7). Guthrie's contribution is an admirable example of the way this purpose should be fulfilled.

Comment on each passage is divided into three parts—"original meaning," "bridging contexts," and "contemporary significance." Guthrie is effective in his use of each of these sections. His discussion of the "original meaning" is consistently balanced and thorough. It would be easy to get bogged down in the "bridging contexts" section, because this section is neither "fish nor fowl"—neither "original meaning" nor "contemporary significance." Guthrie, however, uses this section appropriately to prepare us for contemporary application in several different ways. He usually identifies

the important the subsidiary theological themes in a passage (see on 1:1-4). Sometimes he explains the author's use of the OT (see on 2:5-9; 7:1-10). Sometimes he tells us how a particular passage reflects on significant theological controversies of the past (see on 2:10-18). His "contemporary significance" sections are timely but not faddish. For instance, he describes how Heb. 1:1-4 addresses the issues of naturalism and relativism and how 1:5-14 relates to contemporary interest in angels.

As one would expect from the author of *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis* (E.J. Brill, 1994; Baker, 1998), Guthrie's interpretation shows great sensitivity to structure and to the overall message of Hebrews. For instance, his interpretation of Heb. 2:5-9 is enriched by his demonstrating how this passage provides a transition from the exaltation of the Son (1:5-14) to the Son's solidarity with humanity (2:10-18).

Every commentator on Hebrews must deal with the significance of the warning passages in relation to the perseverance of the believer. Guthrie's basic approach is to assume that, like all congregations, the congregation addressed by Hebrews consisted of a mixture of those who truly believed and those who only appeared to believe. Those who persevere demonstrate the truthfulness of their salvation by that perseverance (see, for instance, pages 132-136, 142-143). This position is most difficult to sustain in reference to 6:4-8. It is hard to see how, on the basis of Guthrie's own analysis (pp. 217-221), the writer of these verses could be describing the appearance rather than the reality of genuine conversion (pp. 230-232). We would certainly agree, however, that "the warnings simply are too harsh and specific to tone them down to a loss of reward rather than a loss of salvation" (p. 228).

Guthrie, however, is correct in emphasizing that, regardless of one's position on perseverance, the pastoral purpose of the warnings is to encourage faithfulness. His commentary will be helpful even to those of us who believe that Hebrews is addressing genuine Christians faced with the possibility of apostasy.

This reviewer would also like to have seen a stronger emphasis on holiness, the inner transformation of the believer. In my judgment, Guthrie ties the cleansing "of our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God" (9:14) too closely with justification rather than with sanctification (p. 333). Is not sanctification the main point in the contrast between the outward ritual purification of the old sacrifices and the inner purification of the sacrifice of Christ? The *aphesis* of sin (9:22; 10:18) refers to more than "forgiveness."

All in all, this is an excellent volume, highly recommended both for the preacher/teacher and the scholar. The former will find solid exegesis and concrete direction for application. Scholars, who want to compare Guthrie's interpretation with that of others, can read the "original meaning" and perhaps the "bridging contexts" sections. Guthrie has done a service to all those who want to proclaim the word of God from the book of Hebrews.

Gareth Lee Cockerill, Wesley Biblical Seminary



Gary Dorrien, *The Remaking of Evangelical Theology*, Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.

Harvey Cox has been calling for fairminded dialog between "liberals" and "conservatives" for a number of years now. Conservatives have written about liberals, mostly to warn against the dangers of accomodationist theology. Liberals, on the other hand, have ignored serious engagement with conservative theology. Gary Dorrien's book has broken through this impasse!

Dorrien is "an Anglican social gospeler and dialectical theologian" (p. 11). It is clear, however, that Dorrien is well acquainted with evangelical history, theology, values, terminology, churches, traditions, and the many personalities who have shaped evangelicalism. The focus of the book is not to blast evangelical theology for its anti-intellectual or dogmatic fundamentalism. Rather, it is to detail the origins and morphologies of evangelicalism in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Dorrien does so critically and skillfully. He exhibits an intimate knowledge of and healthy intellectual respect for the evangelical movement.

Chapter 1 traces the rise of fundamentalist evangelicalism from such divergent groups as Protestant scholasticism, Princeton Reformed orthodoxy (Warfield, the Hodges), and dispensationalism. What bound early fundamentalists together was the external threat of modernity and the liberal accommodation to modernity coupled with the internal impulse to uphold the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. Fundamentalist evangelicalism overcame modernity by employing a rigorous rationalist epistemology.

Chapter 2 shows how Fuller Theological Seminary was the catalyst in departing from obscurant fundamentalist evangelicalism and opened the door to a more intellectually respectable neoevangelicalism. The founders (Ockenga, Harrison, Smith, Henry and Lindsell) sought to reform fundamentalism from the inside. It was Harvard trained, but emotionally unstable, E. G. Carnell who became the representative of the new evangelicalism. It was under Carnell's presidency that a more progressive faculty filtered the ranks (Jewett, Ladd, Fuller, LaSor) and later created a split between inerrantists and infallibilists.

Chapter 3 surveys the tension over inerrancy within neoevangelicalism, which was defended by Henry and Lindsell and challenged by Bernard Ramm and Clark Pinnock. Both of the latter theologians were lured away from strict inerrancy by the issue of the humanity of scripture and the influence of neoorthodoxy. Ramm eventually took to the threefold Barthian understanding of the Word of God as Jesus, scripture and preaching. Donald Bloesch also was infected by the Barthian bug. The net result of the conflict over the Bible within evangelicalism, Dorrien narrates, is that it can no longer be said that all evangelicals hold to a hard line literalist interpretation of the inerrancy of scripture.

Chapter 4 begins to tell the story of evangelical diversity. Up to this point, much of Dorrien's history of evangelicalism has focused upon the Reform tradition. In this chapter, we hear of social activist evangelicals like Ron Sider and Jim Wallis, Wesleyan evangelicals like Billy Abraham, Pentecostal evangelicals like Gordon Fee and Steve Land, Arminian evangelicals like Clark Pinnock, and Catholic-minded evangelicals like Robert Webber and Tom Oden. Most of the non-Reformed evangelicals, Dorrien points out, are not committed to logic-chopping biblical inerrancy.

Chapter 5 caps off the book by detailing the growing shift of evangelical scholarship to reconsider doctrines pertaining to scripture, God, and salvation. Dorrien notes that much of the tension between postconservative evangelical theology and liberal theology still centers around the issue of biblical authority. That probably will not change any time soon. The new progressive evangelicals, as a result, are more interested in dialog with narrative and postliberal theologians such as Hans Frei and George Lindbeck. Dorrien closes out his narrative by affirming the new openness to cultural issues, but is dismayed by the lack of a developed feminist evangelical theology.

Dorrien's book does have limitations. It is slanted in favor of a more liberal social ethic and Dorrien does not miss a chance to defend Barth's understanding of the Word of God. Also, he focuses too narrowly upon biblical authority and inerrancy as the only issues with which evangelicals concerned themselves. In addition, Dorrien unintentionally gives the misguided impression that Arminian theology is the root cause of postconservative evangelicalism. Having noted these limits, however, the book could possibly be the breakthrough text for a fresh dialog between liberals and conservative theologians in the third millennium.

Kenneth Brewer, Zarephath NJ

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Millard J. Erickson, *The Evangelical Left: Encountering Postconservative Evangelical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997.

Millard Erickson is apprehensive that a new generation of younger evangelical scholars are rethinking some classic evangelical doctrines. The doctrines being considered for revision are the task and method of theology, the doctrine of scripture, the doctrine of God, and the doctrine of salvation. Erickson devotes a full chapter to each of these topics. He juxtaposes the classic doctrine with the postconservative revision, offers an analysis, and then concludes each chapter with a positive and a negative evaluation. Erickson states that his purpose for writing is to "alert" his readers to these new developments without seeming to be "alarmist" (p. 9). It is clear from his book, however, that Erickson is not in favor of the trend to revision or redefine any of the classic doctrinal distinctives that have shaped evangelical identity.

Erickson sets postconservative evangelical theology in historical context. He begins by showing charts of numerical decline in the mainline churches with regard to foreign missionary outreach. This, Erickson contends, is a consequence of adopting liberal theology. The point he wants to make is that tinkering with theology has had significant practical consequences for the life of the church. Hence, evangelicals must pay close attention not only to formal theological beliefs but also to the "actual content of those formulas or expressions" (p. 16). After sketching a brief history of evangelicalism (largely narrated from the Reformed tradition), Erickson comes to postconservative evangelical theology and notes that while they accept the formal beliefs of evangelicalism, they are altering the theological content of evangelical theology. Fuller Theological Seminary started this trend and it is being carried out today by Bernard Ramm, Clark Pinnock, Stanley Grenz, Roger Olson, John Sanders and many others.

Erickson is careful to deal with individual theologians and their particular views, rather than falsely characterize postconservative theology as a theologically monolithic

movement. What postconservatives have in common with regard to theological method, however, is that they have been influenced either by Karl Barth, postliberal theology or narrative theology in some way. In addition, many of them have adopted the Wesleyan quadrilateral (scripture, tradition, reason and experience) or they are more open to culture as a source for theological information. What upsets Erickson most about postconservative evangelical theology is their decisive turn away from the foundationalist propositional theology that has characterized much of evangelicalism in the past.

The sharp turn away from foundationalist propositional theology has had direct consequences for the doctrine of scripture. Here the influence of Barth on postconservatives is most evident. Postconservatives have accepted the idea of a limited view of inerrancy. They have been more open to the human side of scripture, the inductive method of interpreting scripture, a more personal view of revelation and postconservatives have been willing to utilize historical critical methods of interpretation, including redaction criticism. All of these trends make Erickson very nervous that postconservative evangelicals have veered significantly away from the core affirmations of classic evangelical theology.

Of chief concern for Erickson are the postconservative reconstructions of the doctrines of God and salvation. Postconservatives, Erickson shutters, are dangerously close to Whitehead's process view of God. Erickson understands that the postconservative "open view of God" differs from process theism in that God's limitations are self-imposed rather than ontological. It is Erickson's estimation, however, that too much is given to human and divine freedom at the expense of God's power, foreknowledge and sovereignty. Likewise, Erickson is set on edge by the postconservative evangelical view of salvation as it has been reformulated by Pinnock and Sanders. Erickson considers the notions of implicit faith, postmortem encounters, and annihilation as inadequate, ambiguous, and unbiblical.

In the final chapter, Erickson asks "Where to from here?" Although Erickson does not think that postconservative evangelical theologians have crossed the borders out of evangelicalism, they are definitely camped at the city limit. Any further move from the center and it would be difficult to say that postconservative evangelical theology is truly an evangelical option. Erickson, therefore, hopes that the current movement of evangelical theology will reverse itself back in the direction of a more conservative theological posture.

Kenneth Brewer

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Garth Rosell, ed., *The Evangelical Landscape: Essays on the American Evangelical Tradition*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1996.

This short volume, comprising three lectures given in 1990 to Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, seek not only to review the state of evangelicalism in America in the 90s, but also to suggest a way ahead if evangelical thought and practice is to make a significant contribution to the America of the twenty-first century.

Mark Noll's essay on 'The Evangelical Mind' argues for a greater intellectual engagement with the culture in all its aspects. If we do not wish the future to be shaped by Madison Avenue, Hollywood, ESPN, and the publishers of *USA Today*, we must



provide both a theological critique and an intellectually credible alternative to their proposals. This is not an abandonment of our evangelical principles and commitments. Rather, it arises from our seriousness about the sovereignty of God over the entirety of the world he created.

Bruce Shelley contributes a three-fold agenda for today's evangelicalism. First, we need to take seriously the priority of community rather than individualism. A confessing church, with an alternative to the popular gospel of self-expression, will emphasize the life-long process of being engrafted into a new people. Second, we need a renewed commitment to the Bible's evangelistic mandate rather than the ghetto mentality that prevails in many quarters. Third, we need to generate 'transformational leaders', those who, driven by a vision of a new tomorrow, are able to win support for that vision and so transform congregations.

Timothy Smith is the author of the final essay, 'The Evangelical Contribution', which calls on us to recognize that the glory of evangelicalism is to be found, at least in part, in its rich diversity. He argues that the greatest need among evangelical Christians today is the development of respect for one another within the family. He outlines the place of Puritans, Quakers, Baptists, Mennonites, Amish, Methodists, Anglicans, and Disciples of Christ within the family. He concludes, 'when we speak of the task of renewing the evangelical vision in our time, we must first attend to the crucial task of breaking down the walls that divide us' (p. 71).

There is much to commend this little volume. Here is a series of challenges which evangelicals cannot afford to ignore. There is more than a grain of truth in the charge that we have largely failed to work through the implications of the gospel for our involvement in culture (and in particular, intellectual culture). It is also true that we have acquiesced in the Western love affair with individualism. What is more, no one can seriously deny that evangelical Christians have tended to be partisan and parochial. Our habit of defining ourselves against one another deserves the most robust challenge.

However, the volume appears to operate with, at best, a somewhat vague understanding of 'evangelicalism'. Where definitional statements are made they are less than adequate, perhaps because each writer is attempting to be as inclusive as possible. Readers will be surprised by what is missing in Bruce Shelley's description of evangelicals as 'that company of American Christians committed to the authority of the Bible, the centrality of a personal experience of the grace of God and the responsibility of making this good news known to those outside the household of faith' (p. 46). The same gaps can be discerned in Timothy Smith's definition: 'those historic American religious communities that are united by a commitment to biblical authority, a belief in the necessity of conversion or new birth, and an emphasis upon world wide evangelization' (p. 69).

In the end the lack of serious engagement with the Scriptures in any of the essays makes their proposals appear rather thin and idiosyncratic. If evangelicalism is first and foremost an understanding of Christian faith and life 'from the gospel out', then perhaps we ought to have been given a clear presentation of the gospel and definite lines of connection between that gospel and the agenda proposed by each contributor. Mark Noll begins to take us in this direction but he does not go far enough. After all, might there not be good reason why no evangelical scholar 'is quoted as a normative source by the greatest secular authorities on history or philosophy or psychology or sociology

## Book Reviews

or politics' (p. 35)? If we are to bend our *Review of 'The Evangelical Landscape: Essays on the American Tradition'* energies in the directions Noll, Shelley, and Smith are suggesting, we need theological – and not merely pragmatic – reasons for doing so.

In sum, here is a collection of essays worth reading. However like all such attempts to set the modern evangelical agenda, they need to be read with a critical mind and with our Bibles open.

Mark D. Thompson, Moore Theological College, Australia

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Max Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998. viii + 383 pp, \$19.95.

This is an excellent book, and the US edition is an improvement on its earlier British counterpart. Not only are various printing glitches removed (although the footnote on p.136 remains incomplete, and typographical errors also remain) but so too a useful extended contents table is added, as is a bibliography. Not least useful here is a convenient listing of some (but not all) of the author's own articles.

Also worthy of note is the addition of three volumes added to the end of the bibliography, all of which might be considered as systematic rather than biblical theology. This is significant, for Turner's own work is as theologically sophisticated as it is informed by and in dialogue with contemporary New Testament scholarship.

Thus although the book is divided formally into two parts, the first dealing with the development of the doctrine of the Spirit in the New Testament and the second addressing the place of spiritual gifts both then and now, the chapters which form the bridge between the two parts almost warrant a section of their own. Here are introduced lightly and deftly the contributions of figures such as Gabler, Wrede and Schlatter. Having outlined the ongoing implications of their work, Turner, arguing against H Raisanen, seeks to make a case as to why New Testament theology is worthy of study in the secular world of the academy as well as within the confessional world of the seminary.

The case is put briefly, so it is unlikely that Raisanen or his followers would consider Turner's critique to be definitive. Yet what the discussion does succeed in doing is to present sympathetically and cogently (and within the parameters of the historical critical approach to Scripture; Turner, following N T Wright, appeals to critical realism) an argument sometimes assumed rather than articulated by Evangelicals, the most likely readers of this book. The task of New Testament theology thus defended, Turner moves next to demonstrate how he may bring together the voices of the different New Testament witnesses to the Spirit, witnesses whom in part one he dealt with individually.

These witnesses are the usual suspects: Paul, Luke and John. The choice is neither surprising nor unprecedented, but frustrating nevertheless. Certainly these are the three voices that will need to be heard at length in any discussion of a New Testament theology of the Holy Spirit, but surely the relative silence of other contributors will be of as much importance as the contributions of Luke, Paul and John.

What of Matthew, for example with his apparent caution towards charismatics (Mt 7:22) and his Jesus who, unlike the Jesus of Luke and John, appears not to give the

Spirit to his disciples precisely because he himself remains with them (Mt 28:19-20, but note Mt 10:20; Cf Jn 14; Acts 1:8 & 2:33)? Again, there are voices that might be heard from the Apocalypse and from the writer to the Hebrews, just as there appears to be a silence in the letter of James. Or do apparently non-charismatic texts in fact assume the charismatic position of other writers? There would appear to be an imbalance here in Turner's presentation, as in that of other works which have been similarly selective. Perhaps Turner might provide readers of this book with the further benefit of addressing these theological issues in a future work?

Part two of the monograph relates spiritual gifts in the New Testament church to their place in the church of today. Three gifts are focussed on: tongues, healing and prophecy. Turner carefully affirms the contemporary place of all three, and is not afraid graciously but cogently to critique both conservative cessationist and Pentecostal perspectives, as well as some charismatic perspectives, along the way. He is also keen to affirm that the Spirit is at work outside as well as inside the explicitly charismatic and Pentecostal streams of the church. He proposes instead "a via media in spirituality between Pentecostalism and more traditional forms of Christianity".

This is a treatment to be commended as much for its irenic tone as for its substance. Those who are in sympathy with Turner's nuanced charismatic perspective will find here an unparalleled treasure house from which to draw. Those who take other views will find arguments with which they will need to engage.

Readers seeking a detailed and lengthy summary of this book together with a critique from a Pentecostal perspective may be referred to the review article by J C Thomas in *The Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 12 (1998). Turner's response may be found in the same volume.

Andrew Gregory

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Moroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998, xii + 314 pp., pb., \$28.00/£18.99.

The market is not exactly swamped with Free Church ecclesiologies and, for this reason alone, this volume is to be welcomed. Miroslav Volf, who is Professor of Systematic Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary, submitted an earlier version of the manuscript for a postdoctoral degree at the University of Tübingen and, although the work has been revised for publication, it retains its academic rigour.

The work is divided into two parts. In the first part Professor Volf describes and analyses the respective ecclesiologies of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (as a representative of the Roman Catholic tradition) and Metropolitan John Zizioulas (as a representative of the Orthodox tradition), considering their contribution to an understanding of the Church principally in the light of their respective understandings of the doctrine of the Trinity. This is (in this reviewer's opinion) the most effective and useful part of the book as the author demonstrates with great clarity the manner in which two quite different accounts of the Trinity find expression in two quite different accounts of the Church, and, in particular, of the relationship between the local and the universal. One is left wondering, however, concerning his choice of representatives. Zizioulas, while perhaps an idiosyncratic representative of a tradition, has at least written specifically on the relatedness of an Eastern understanding of the Trinity and an Eastern expression of the



Church. Ratzinger, however, notwithstanding his prominence and influence as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, has not written a substantial ecclesiology and his piecemeal contribution seems less explicitly an outworking of an account of the Trinity than, for example, the more systematic work of Karl Rahner. One suspects, therefore, that Ratzinger was selected as a sparring partner in preference to Rahner for the sake of drawing a sharp contrast between the traditions-and the contrast could hardly be sharper.

If the intention of the second section of the book had been to compare the previous authors with the writings of the early Baptist leader, John Smyth, the project seems to have been abandoned or, at least, modified. Smyth's account of the Church is hardly informed by his understanding of the Trinity and, in this respect alone, the comparison with Ratzinger and Zizioulas is difficult to draw. Arguably, the nuances and developments in Smyth's thinking are insufficiently identified and, though Professor Volf distances himself from the elements of individualism in Smyth's profoundly covenantal description of the Church, the latter's contribution is never subjected to the rigour of analysis and criticism previously endured by Ratzinger and Zizioulas. This second section of the book, then, comprising five chapters in contrast to the two chapters of the first section, in actuality represents the author's own 'Free Church' response to the contrasting traditions outlined in the first section, and it is here, therefore, that his own positive contribution must be assessed. Following a chapter focused on definitions, Professor Volf considers the relationship between the person and the Church, the correspondence of the Trinity with the Church, the structures of the Church, and the catholicity of the Church. While each chapter is informed by his non-hierarchical account of the Trinity, one might have expected, given the title of the work, that a distinctive account of the Trinity would have been even more predominant. This surprising lack is compounded by the relative lack of rigour, not to say persuasiveness, in the account of the Trinity that here is offered: the response to Zizioulas' typically Orthodox notion of hierarchy is less than convincing and Colin Gunton's Bampton Lectures (*The One, the Three and the Many*) are never considered despite the similarity of Professor Gunton's arguments to those rehearsed here.

And since a distinctive account of the Trinity is crucial to Professor Volf's account of the Church, and in particular to his account of its ministry and of the relatedness of the local to the universal, this reviewer was left with a lingering sense of dissatisfaction, notwithstanding the book's undoubted merits and timeliness. It may be, of course, that a distinctively Free Church ecclesiology will remain unpersuasive to the older traditions of the Church; that a commitment to the gathered community can only exist in tension with any sense of a *visible* universal (not least when, as so often, the gathered has been defined precisely in terms of its distinction from the *visible* universal); that the 'charismatic' and the 'institutional' simply cannot be reconciled more effectively than is here achieved. Perhaps what is required is not so much a 'Free Church ecclesiology' as an ecclesiology that is inclusive (though not uncritical) of the phenomenon of the Free Churches-but that would result in a very different book.

John E. Colwell, Spurgeon's College, London

J. Denny Weaver, *Keeping Salvation Ethical: Mennonite and Amish Atonement Theology in the Late Nineteenth Century*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1997, 316 pp.

In this book Weaver delves deeply into theological topics in which he has had on ongoing interest: Christology, atonement, salvation, nonresistance. His fundamental thesis, as articulated by C. Norman Kraus in the "Foreword" to the work, is that "a gradual acceptance of the penal substitutionary theory of atonement threatened to displace the earlier Anabaptist-Mennonite concept of salvation through identification with the nonresistant Christ on the cross" (13). Weaver tests this thesis by looking at the writings of eight leading Amish and Mennonite figures from the mid and latter half of the nineteenth century: Jacob Stauffer, David Beiler, Gerhard Wiebe, Cornelius H. Wedel, Johannes Moser, John M. Brenneman, John Holdeman, and Heinrich Egly. These men spanned the practical/doctrinal spectrum from advocates of the old order of the faith to those possessing a more progressive outlook.

An overview of the contents of the book reveals Weaver's methodology. In the "Introduction," he sets forth his thesis and methodology. Chapter 2, "History of Atonement," presents a helpful review and critique of the major theories of the atonement and sets the backdrop for testing his thesis by looking at the atonement theories of two prominent nineteenth century Protestants: the revivalist, Charles G. Finney, and a representative of the Princeton theology, Benjamin B. Warfield. Throughout this discussion Weaver raises the question of how well these atonement theories serve as a foundation for Christian ethics and especially nonresistance. Chapters 3 through 5 focus on the thought of Weaver's eight subjects, considering, respectively, their "worldview and attitudes on selected issues in North American society," "the theological context within which each writer understood the death of Christ," and "the basic image which each individual used to explain what the death of Christ accomplished for sinful humanity" (33). In chapter 6 Weaver briefly explores how ethics became separated from the atonement by two Mennonites from the latter 1800s and early 1900s: John S. Coffman and Daniel Kauffman. Weaver offers his conclusions in the last chapter.

Throughout his work Weaver constantly is assessing how well various atonement theories serve as vehicles for ethics and nonresistance. Though this is obviously only one criterion by which to judge the usefulness of theories of the atonement, it is a most important one for those in the Anabaptist tradition. Weaver is highly critical of the various versions of the satisfaction/substitutionary model because there is no necessary inherent link between the significance of Christ's death and the ethics of the Christian life. He feels that the Christus Victor model of the atonement, held by the early church, offers a far better foundation for ethics. This is the case because this "image portrays salvation as escape from the forces of evil, as being transformed by the reign of God and taking on a life shaped within the story of Jesus, who makes visible the reign of God in our history" (44).

The research that Weaver has done in exploring the thought world of his eight subjects is impressive. He has immersed himself in the writings of his subjects in order to bring to the surface their views of the atonement and how the Christian life of love and nonresistance interfaces with their concept of Christ's salvific work. This is not always easy because the Amish and Mennonite writers of this period, for the most part,

reflect the biblical, practical worldview of their Anabaptist forebears rather than the more scholastic and systematic constructs of most of their Protestant contemporaries.

I find curious one aspect of his methodology which also leads me to an observation about his thesis. In his thorough review of atonement theories, he fails to discuss the approach to the atonement found among the sixteenth century Anabaptists, especially the Mennonites, Menno Simons and Dirk Philips. Both these men utilized a variety of motifs for the atonement including, among others, substitution, satisfaction, reconciliation, incarnation, and Christus Victor. Interestingly, Weaver notes in his conclusion regarding his eight subjects: "To explain atonement, they used different sets of terminology and a variety of images" (222). It would appear that the thought world of Weaver's subjects regarding the atonement is drawn more from sixteenth and seventeenth century Mennonite thought than nineteenth century evangelical thought. (This is also borne out by the fact that several writers continue to reflect Menno's "celestial flesh" concept as well as the idea found in the *Martyrs Mirror* of a continuous line of faithful witnesses that can trace the true church back to the apostolic period without going through Roman Catholicism.) The sixteenth century Mennonites overcame the deficiencies of the satisfaction/substitution theory by avoiding an exclusive use of this model. Other atonement motifs (reconciliation, incarnation, Christus Victor) allowed them to keep the link to ethics strong. Though I share Weaver's critique of the satisfaction/substitution theory, I feel the best way to rectify the problems associated with it is that proposed by John Driver in *Understanding the Atonement*: the full meaning of Christ's saving work can be understood only by drawing out the implications of all the models (he cites ten) used in the New Testament to portray the atonement.

Other than this one point of departure from Weaver, I affirm the observations and conclusions he sets forth in his conclusion. Some of these are: (1) the linking of salvation theology with ethics is a distinctive characteristic of the Anabaptist heritage that must not be lost. (2) We in the Anabaptist tradition must beware using an atonement theory that weakens or dissolves this link. (3) Relegating such emphases as imitating Christ, nonresistance, and love of enemies to the periphery of the saved life in effect makes them optional. (4) Mennonites and Anabaptists represent a theological perspective different from the dominant Protestant and Western theological models because these models tend to reflect many elements of Constantinian Christendom.

Weaver's book is a welcomed addition to research into nineteenth century Amish and Mennonite thought. Though the primary audience for this book would be Mennonite, as a Brethren, I found many parallels to what was taking place in the nineteenth century among the Brethren. In addition, his critique of the satisfaction/substitution model of the atonement should be taken seriously by other faith traditions as well as his call for keeping an inherent link between salvation and ethics.

Dale R. Stoffer



Richard Bauckham and Trevor Hart. *At the Cross: Meditations on People Who Were There*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1999. 128 pp., \$9.99.

A book very similar to others of its type that focus on the people around the Cross. The writers do seem to touch some important themes as they look deeply at each of the individuals. Some interesting historical information is suggested. Poetic meditations at the end of each chapter will be helpful to a pastor searching for preaching points and prayer direction. Interesting treatments include Judas Iscariot - betrayal; Simon Peter - failure; Mary Magdalene - endurance; Simon of Cyrene - carrying the Cross. Bauckham and Hart provide foundational material for a meaningful Lenten sermon or teaching series. Cliff Stewart

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Erwin Fahlbusch, et.al., eds., *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, vol. 1 (A-D), Trans. By Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999, pp. 893, \$100.00.

This encyclopedia is based on the third edition of the *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon*, which has gained scholarly regard in Germany and elsewhere. It is more, however, that just another translating coup by Geoffrey Bromiley. The English edition includes quite a few articles not found in the German original. There are articles on all the countries of the world except a few small ones. David B. Barrett has had a significant role as the statistical editor of this volume. He has provided religious statistics for every continent and each country which is included.

The English edition adds over seventy biographical articles on prominent historical figures, which corrects one of the weaknesses of the German work. Other articles were expanded in this addition to treat aspects of subjects that have particular pertinence to North America. It is easy, therefore, to understand the enthusiasm of the scholars who predict that this will be a standard reference work for years to come.

Most of the articles, of course, are written by German scholars, though there is some effort to engage other writers, especially on non-European articles. The present edition adds a number of writers from the English world to add perspective to the basic articles and to cover issues in the American church. These additions give the encyclopedia the appearance of up-to-date information. Paul Bassett's article on the "Church of the Nazarene," for example, includes a reference to the Christian Holiness Partnership, a name change which occurred just over two years ago. Still a few of the original articles slip by with defects. The discussion in "Antinomian Controversies" is restricted to German Lutheranism alone, oblivious to such controversies in other denominations in England, the United States, and other parts of the world.

The articles cover the expected areas of doctrine, liturgy, ethics, ecclesiology, and the history of the Christian Church. Major topics generally get extensive coverage: baptism (13 pages), Christology (17), Church (26) and Dogma/Dogmatics (12); but atonement is disappointingly short (4). The work is broadly ecumenical both in the perspective of the articles and in the number of Christian groups covered in the encyclopedia. It even includes the major world religions and Christian groups considered to be unorthodox. There is considerable attention to the social sciences and

the cultural contexts Christians have faced around the world. Guenther C. Rimbach's article on the "Baroque" period, for instance, is outstanding in this regard.

The work is reader-friendly. Articles are well outlined. There are numerous cross-references; if anything, they occur so frequently in some sections as to be distracting. Bibliographies at the end of articles are more than adequate, and generally include the most recent sources of significance.

Overall this is a solid reference work. Libraries and scholars will want to have this encyclopedia. They will eagerly await the appearance of the four volumes yet to come, even though the price of each volume puts them beyond the general reading public.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

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Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church*, Volume 1: *The Biblical Period*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1998. 383 pp, \$35.00.

\_\_\_\_ Volume 2: *The Patristic Age*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1998. 481 pp., \$42.00.

One way of understanding something is to examine its history. Seminaries believe that students should know something about church history. Denominational boards of ordination believe that candidates should have some knowledge of the denomination's history. It is, therefore, somewhat surprising that a historical examination of the reading and preaching of Scripture is not usually an integral part of learning how to preach or to lead worship. In these volumes Old has demonstrated the value of such a study.

In the introduction to the first volume, Old informs the reader that his original motivation and purpose for the study was to discover the reasons for the decline in the art of preaching and to offer some remedy to the problem. In response to this concern, he decides to write a history of preaching. This idea is further refined so that what he presents is a historical study of how preaching has functioned as worship.

It is immediately evident that Old is aware of the problems that are involved in such an endeavor. Old readily acknowledges how the difficult issues of biblical interpretation, the problems of sources and texts, and the difficulties in selection of sermons all contribute to the complexity of his enterprise. He also notes and briefly explains five different genres of preaching which provide a framework for his comments.

Volume one is devoted to the biblical period. Chapter one addresses the Old Testament where Old sees the precursors of the functions of Scripture in Christian worship. For example, by discussing the work of scholars like Peter Craigie and Gerhard von Rad on the book of Deuteronomy, Old observes the beginnings of the significance of expository preaching. Old not only examines the major elements of the *Tanakh*, but he discusses the important contributions of the synagogue and rabbinic traditions such as the emergence of the *lectio continua* and the role of formal schooling.

Chapter two focuses on the role of Scripture and preaching in the New Testament. The chapter has seven sections. The first three are devoted to "the ministry of

preaching" in the Gospels and the book of Acts. The other four sections address "the ministry of the Word" in passages from various epistles. Too much should not be made of this distinction between these ministries, however, as it appears that Old uses the terms somewhat interchangeably. His primary concern is not the function of Scripture in the lives of Jesus and the apostles as much as it is the significance of preaching during that time.

Chapter three analyzes preaching in the second and third centuries. Old writes that the primary task of the preacher during this time is "to pass on this witness, that in Christ is the fulfillment of the Law, that in him the visions of the prophets have been realized" (251). In this chapter Old attempts to offer an explanation of how the early Church moved from what he calls predominately missionary preaching to liturgical preaching.

Volume two is an examination of preaching in the Christian Church since Constantine. Each of the first three chapters is dedicated to one of the major cities in Christendom: Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Antioch. This is a particularly astute way of dividing the material since Christianity in these areas differed from one another in their approach to interpreting Scripture.

I found chapter four to be one of the gems of volume two. Personally, my knowledge of and exposure to the Syriac church is somewhat limited, so much of the material was new to me. I appreciated the extensive primary source material which Old included in the chapter. His attention to this aspect of Christendom is a testimony to his thoroughness. It also offers an interesting transition from the study of the Greek church in the first three chapters to the Latin church which he begins to evaluate in chapter five.

Chapter five brings us from the less familiar material of chapter four to the more familiar names of the Latin fathers such as Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine. Old includes a discussion of a lesser known preacher, Maximus of Turin in order to demonstrate the genius of preachers like Augustine. Chapter six completes this volume and is also about the Latin church, but it considers preaching during the decline of the Roman Empire.

These volumes are readily accessible to college students and should offer no problem to Old's intended audience, pastors. His writing is simple and clear but not condescending. The work flows logically. The only curiosity in the organization of the work is the inclusion of the Apostolic, second-century, and third-century fathers in volume one which is subtitled "The Biblical Period." While the present arrangement provides more balance between the length of the volumes, I would have expected to find a discussion of people like Origen in the second volume.

Old began volume one by acknowledging the tremendous importance of preaching, particularly in American Protestantism. He proceeded to lament the decline of the art in recent years, which seemed to be his original impetus for this work. As he sharpened the focus of the project, he set out to write a history of preaching as worship. What he has offered with these volumes is the extremely valuable first step to achieving that goal. Old is obviously familiar with the significant literature as well as lesser-known material. He is to be commended for this great contribution to homiletics.

While there is little doubt that these volumes accomplish Old's specific intention, I am uncertain about their success in addressing Old's original intent. Let me be clear that I do not doubt the importance of a history of preaching. In fact, I believe that such



a work is long overdue. I also do not deny the centrality of preaching nor the urgency of homiletical renewal. Yet, I wonder, How does this project facilitate this much needed renewal? How will establishing the crucial role of preaching in the worship of the early church assist in rejuvenating the art of preaching today? While I do not find this issue addressed in these volumes, perhaps it will be in a later one.

Old does an admirable job of avoiding the many pitfalls of this type of study. Although his Reformed theology is easily discernible at times, it does not cloud his study nor is it a distraction to the reader. He is careful to evade problems like issues of biblical interpretation, but he does not hesitate to offer comments when necessary. We are indebted to Old for his painstaking work, and I am convinced that those who are interested in preaching will find it extremely worthwhile.

J. Robert Douglass, Whitaker, PA

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Paul L. Maier (tr.), *Eusebius: The Church History. A New Translation with Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1999. 412 pp. \$29.99.

Dr. Maier, who has labored long to make Josephus more accessible to the interested reader as well as written several fine novels set in the first century, now brings his skills as a translator and communicator to the most important source of early church history. Maier has sought to remain faithful to Eusebius' words while also striving for concise expression, thus reducing the overall length of Eusebius by about one-fifth to one-fourth without sacrificing content. In his own words, "if Eusebius had had a good editor, this is how his text might have appeared" (p. 18).

Maier has added an introduction to Eusebius' life, the larger corpus of his writings, and the *Church History* in particular. He also provides brief commentary at the close of each of the ten books (chapter divisions) of Eusebius' work. In these commentaries, Maier judiciously reminds the readers of the flaws in Eusebius' historiography, lest the unwary read it uncritically, leaving the reader with a balanced impression of the reliability of the source. He also sets the "ecclesiastical history" more securely in the context of Roman imperial history.

The book is illustrated throughout with well-selected photographs of important sites or artefacts (such as statues) showing key figures in imperial history. A bibliography on scholarly work on Eusebius and indices of persons, places, subjects, and illustrations complete the volume. On the whole, this volume offers a pleasant and accessible introduction to this important resource for church history, one in which the accessible translation and fine illustrations may more than compensate for the rather hefty price (when compared with the paperback translation by G. A. Williamson published by Penguin).

David A. deSilva

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Michael Fell, *And Some Fell Into Good Soil: A History of Christianity in Iceland*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1999. 405 pp., cloth, \$62.95.

This reviewer is tempted to write "a must book for every pastor's shelf", but one wonders why anyone but a select few would want to read a history of the Christian

church in Iceland! Perhaps this is not a "must" book for a pastor, yet there is a sense that a look at the church history of a far-away land does help one view life near-at-hand with a fresh perspective.

Of note is that Iceland will celebrate in the year 2000 the 1000<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of Christianity being officially adopted as the basis of its laws and observances. Iceland, in both geological origin and history is the youngest country in Europe. The Christian church has been an important component in the development of the Icelandic people up to the present day.

Even something as simple as how people are named in Iceland causes one to think about Christian influence through individuals. In Iceland people are known by their baptismal name such as Jon or Helga. The only other name is patronymic, consisting of the father's first name with 'son' or 'dottir' suffixed according to sex. The difference implies a difference in attitude toward names. In English-speaking countries a person is denoted in particular by a last name, a family name. But in Iceland one is called by first name, even in formal or official situations. The Iceland telephone directory lists subscribers alphabetically by first name! Even a little detail like names in another culture can cause one to reflect on the Christian importance of the individual. Do any of us remember the apostle Paul's last name?!

One can read about the manner in which the Reformation brought about radical change in Iceland. Other periods of interest include the era of Neo-Orthodoxy within the Icelandic Church, the beginnings of Secularism and Pluralism, the "new" Theology and Spiritualism, the Evangelical and Charismatic Revival.

This is a well written and thoroughly researched book that might be interesting to others not necessarily interested in Icelandic religious affairs. Cliff Stewart

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Hans-Jürgen Goertz, *The Anabaptists*. Translated by Trevor Johnson. New York: Routledge, 1996, 215 pages.

Originally published in German in 1980 and revised in 1988, this work was further revised and translated into English in 1996. Goertz continues in the wake of secular historians like James M. Stayer and Claus-Peter Clasen who in the 1970s challenged an idealized picture of the origins of Anabaptism. This picture, developed by Mennonite scholar Harold S. Bender and his associates, held that Anabaptism had its genesis in a group of radicals who dared to oppose the direction of the reform efforts of Ulrich Zwingli in Zurich. This "sterilized" version of Anabaptist origins also sought to distance the "evangelical Anabaptists" from such problematic elements as Thomas Müntzer and the Peasants' War and the revolutionary apocalypticists at Münster.

The secular historians rejected the monogenesis perspective of Mennonite scholarship, that is, that Anabaptism had a single fountainhead in the radicals in Zurich. Instead, they proposed a polygenesis approach that held that there were multiple origins for the movement and that an accurate appraisal of Anabaptism must include *all* the adult baptizers of the sixteenth century. In his work Goertz, a Professor of Social and Economic History at the University of Hamburg, Germany, continues the reassessment of the Anabaptist movement from this secular historical vantage point.

Goertz's thesis is that "it makes sense to interpret Anabaptism in the light of the ecclesiastical and social context of the anticlerical battles of the early Reformation period" (p. xiii). Anticlericalism, the reaction against the Catholic church, especially as represented by its clerical hierarchy, served as a powerful apologetic tool in all phases of the Reformation, but especially in Anabaptism. Goertz tests his thesis from a number of different angles in the work.

The book opens with a helpful discussion of Anabaptist historiography; it is a welcome feature of this book that Goertz up front makes known his own slant and perspective on his subject and shows how his thought fits into the field of Anabaptist historiography. Goertz then traces the theme of anticlericalism through several discussions: a historical overview of the various expressions of Anabaptism; consideration of the Anabaptist call to moral improvement, of baptism, and of the concept of the church and church-state relations. The remaining chapters are devoted to a discussion of the role of "ordinary" Anabaptists and women, a summary of the official mandates issued against the Anabaptists in the Empire and how Anabaptists were officially perceived, and a brief concluding chapter. The appendices include a selection of source materials that support the work's thesis, a helpful chronology of the early years of the Anabaptist movement, and a list of the important works of the Anabaptist leaders who are most frequently cited in the book.

Goertz makes a strong case for viewing anticlericalism as a foundational motivation for much of Anabaptist thought and practice. It was their antipathy for the abuses of the clergy that colored Anabaptist perspectives in such areas as pastoral leadership, the rights of the congregation, baptism, communion, and individual and congregational purity. Interestingly, Goertz observes that reaction against Catholic clerical abuses diffused into harsh criticism of Lutheran and Reformed clergy as well.

Goertz's social/economic/historical perspective yields several noteworthy conclusions. He shows that the earliest Anabaptists only gradually moved away from a popular or mass church concept to the idea of a free church. He underscores the great diversity among Anabaptists in their views of moral improvement, hermeneutics, baptism, ecclesiology, pacifism, and church-state relations. Yet he makes the undoubtedly accurate observation that the differences among the leaders of the Anabaptists were of less consequence to the rank and file Anabaptists. At this level there was greater homogeneity than one would conclude if reading only the leaders' writings.

The very strength of Goertz's social/economic/historical approach is also its weakness. The diminishing of the spiritual element in understanding the Anabaptists and in evaluating their legacy is prominent in the book's conclusion. Goertz observes:

Like the Anabaptists' political and social experiences, their theology belonged to a revolutionary age and disappeared along with the old European social order form which it had arisen. . . . Anabaptist theology was . . . nowhere near becoming an ideology for a modern society. Our society is not theirs. The doctrines of the Anabaptists were as much of their age as the theology of those who persecuted them as heretics. (134-135)

Such an evaluation reflects modernity's attempt to reduce issues of faith to a premodern worldview that no longer has relevance to "modern society." In the end, however, such



a perspective is just as narrow and short-sighted as Bender's idealized picture of Anabaptism which tended to overlook significant social, economic, and political issues. To try to understand Anabaptism without taking into account the timeless and transcultural truth of the Gospel fails to appreciate the inner, spiritual dynamic that made Anabaptists bold witnesses of the truth in their time and that continues to confront our age today with the call to costly commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. As the Anabaptist martyr Balthasar Hübmaier reminded his readers, "Truth is immortal."

Dale Stoffer

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Harry Loewen and Steven Nolt, *Through Fire and Water: An Overview of Mennonite History*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1997, 350 pages.

When groups like the Brethren and Mennonites are asked about their identity, they cannot point to a normative credal statement or the theological writings of a single outstanding leader or the official pronouncements of the church hierarchy. Instead, they frequently point the inquirer to the living witness of the church as it is expressed both historically and in the day-to-day life of members of the church. History thus takes on special significance to these traditions because it conveys a significant portion of their identity as a people of God.

Loewen and Nolt have collaborated in this volume to make available an overview of "the Mennonite faith story" that can be a resource for "individuals who want to learn more about Anabaptists and Mennonites, congregations looking for a way to teach youth and adults about Mennonite origins and beliefs, and students in Mennonite high schools in Canada and the United States" (p. 9). Though meant to be more popular in nature, the book does reflect recent scholarly research, particularly on the multiple origins and diversity of the early Anabaptism. To the credit of the authors, their narration of the Anabaptist/Mennonite story presents a portrait of the movement that reveals its warts as well as its beauty marks.

The book begins with a section on church history that provides a necessarily brief account of the development of the Christian church from the first to the sixteenth century. It is a bit presumptuous to call this work an "introduction to church history" (p. 9) because of the brevity of this section; yet the opening chapters lay a foundation for issues that will be important for understanding the unique witness of the Anabaptists in general and Mennonites in particular (their peace witness, their critique of the established church, the belief in free will).

The next sections take readers on a fascinating journey through the origins of Anabaptism in Switzerland, Holland, South Germany, and Moravia. Readers are then acquainted with the expansion of the Mennonite community into North America, Prussia, and Russia, and, in the last hundred years, around the world. Though some aspects of Mennonite history tend to receive little attention (the history of the Mennonites in Holland and Germany following the sixteenth century), the book does list other works at the end that are excellent resources for filling in the gaps.

There are several features that enhance this telling of the Mennonite story: numerous pictures and maps, the weaving of personal vignettes into the narrative, and interesting side-bars that provide anecdotal side-trips. In addition, five essays challenge

readers to consider the significance of Anabaptist thought in the areas of "the church, following Jesus in daily life, nonviolence and peacemaking, the relationship of church and state, and outreach" (p. 9).

This volume achieves well its stated purpose of serving as a popular introduction to Anabaptist and Mennonite history. It tells, in a very readable fashion, the story of how a small, persecuted, despised people has grown to a worldwide community of faith of over one million people in over sixty countries on six continents. Dale Stoffer

Paul Leslie Kaufman, *"Logical" Luther Lee and the Methodist War Against Slavery*. (Studies in Evangelicalism Series, No. 17). Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2000. 275 pp. \$59.50

Luther Lee (1800-1889) is not a high profile name even among historians of American Christianity. Why, then, should readers be attracted to this book? Beyond the fact that it is a first-rate biography, there are two groups who should have particular interest in its contents: Methodists and students of the abolition movement in America.

Paul Kaufman's doctoral research on Luther Lee has climaxed in what will be the definitive biography on Lee for years to come. Kaufman shows his skills as a seasoned historian in both the depth and the breadth of his research. His relentless search for primary sources uncovered Luther Lee documents thought to be permanently lost. Among these, the text of his oration lionizing John Brown is a treasure. Lee delivered it at Brown's grave site in New York on the first anniversary of his death, at the invitation of Brown's widow. Kaufman's knowledge of 19<sup>th</sup> century American history provides helpful contexts for the episodic events of Lee's life and the causes he chose to champion.

Luther Lee was a product of the revival spirit that conditioned upper New York in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He was also shaped by the frontier atmosphere of the state in his early life and ministry and by the radical social vision that emerged in America by mid-century. Thus Lee was to champion the abolition of slavery, women's rights (including ordination as ministers), and the rights of laborers. Doctrinally, however, he opposed Unitarianism and the religious margins that proved to be so attractive to other social radicals of the period.

On September 15, 1853, Lee preached the ordination sermon for Antoinette Brown, the first woman to be ordained as a pastor of the Congregational Church, before his own denomination approved of women preachers (pp. 163-166). But his chief cause was abolition. He left the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1843 primarily because the denomination would not take an anti-slavery stance. He was one of the leading founders of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, which made abolition one of its primary principles. The defection of Methodist abolitionists to the new denomination appears to have been one of the prods that pushed northern Methodists to take an anti-slavery posture, a move that split the church into northern and southern denominations. In 1867 Lee returned to the Methodist Episcopal Church because he felt the slavery issue had been favorably concluded. And he died with honor in the church which first ordained him to preach.

Kaufman skillfully documents Lee's long career in the abolitionist movement: his writings, orations, offices, and political activities. He notes three stages of Lee's radical

development (pp. 227-228). In the first, he affirmed American government, especially the Bill of Rights, when he preached a sermon condemning the mob violence in Alton, Illinois which took the life of abolitionist minister, Elijah Lovejoy (pp. 62-64). When C.T. Torrey died in a Maryland prison in 1876 for having assisted slaves against their masters, Lee's sermon on the occasion reflects a second stage of his thought. Using Acts 23:29 as his text, he asserted that divine laws superseded human civil laws that authorized slavery and protected slave owners' rights (pp. 141-143). The final stage of his thought is reflected in his anniversary sermon at John Brown's grave (July 4, 1860). In this two hour oration he advocates civil disobedience in the face of legalized evil. Arguing that since slaves have a divine right to be free, he concludes that any action to secure the slaves' freedom is just, including armed action against the government that perpetrates slavery (pp. 184-193).

Kaufman's biography takes us through the various phases of Luther Lee's ministry, demonstrating why the nickname "Logical Lee" is the thread which unites his life. He earned the title in early religious debates against those who attacked Christian orthodoxy. A self-taught logician, Lee honed his argumentative style in sermons, orations, debates, and articles in various radical and ecclesiastical journals. He believed truth (religious and social) had to be crafted, both in oral and written forms, in arguments that were logically persuasive for the audience. A man of many activities and associations, he was unified in heart and thought.

The format of the book is most helpful, especially the chronology (pp. xiii-xvii), the bibliography, and the index. Extensive reference notes conclude each chapter. It is an outstanding book and deserves a wide readership; unfortunately its price is likely to discourage students and general readers. It gets my vote as the best book in American Church History for the year 2000.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

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Dawn DeVries, *Jesus Christ in the Preaching of Calvin and Schleiermacher* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996). x + 115 pages, clothbound, \$16.95.

Hans Frei argued that it is not possible for us since the rise of historical criticism to read and preach the biblical narrative in the same way as pre-critical theologians. Dawn DeVries questions this thesis. She argues that 'Schleiermacher's understanding of preaching as "an incarnational event that re-presents the person and work of the Jesus of history may be seen as a genuine development of Calvin's notion of the sacramental Word' (p.2). Schleiermacher she sees as a legitimate heir of the Reformed tradition, but not as the only or the most adequate heir (p.8).

On what ground can she make this claim? She compares Calvin and Schleiermacher on two points: their theology of preaching and their sermons on the Synoptic Gospels. As regards the former she argues that for both theologians preaching is not merely didactic but sacramental. Preaching is the sacramental Word which presents Christ and indeed conveys his presence. The implications for the sacraments of Calvin's definition of the sacrament as a visible Word have often been explored; the implications for his concept of preaching are much less explored and this book opens up the topic in a stimulating manner.



The author analyses Calvin's sermons on the Synoptic Gospels and notes of one that 'the historical, literal sense of the texts simply holds no interest for Calvin the preacher' (p.35). He 'is rarely satisfied to confine himself to the actual words of the narratives or to the narrated events when he is preaching. He moves constantly from text to meaning, from words to doctrine, and from doctrine to the contemporary problems of being a Christian in sixteenth-century Geneva' (p.41). 'Thus, although Calvin does not question the truth of the history recounted in the Gospels, it is almost entirely irrelevant to him, both for interpretative and for theological reasons, to assert its truth,' she claims (p.42). Frei, therefore is wrong. He identifies three presuppositions of the pre-critical hermeneutic, of which only one really applies to Calvin: the assumption that the biblical story 'referred to and described actual historical occurrences.' The other two do not without qualification apply to Calvin. These are that the various biblical stories described a single real world of one temporal sequence which can be united into one story and that the world truly rendered by combining the biblical narratives must in principle embrace the experience of any present age and reader. By contrast, DeVries argues that one can 'say of [Calvin's] sermons on the Synoptics what Frei said of Schleiermacher's exegesis: that the narratives refer to something else and so mean something different from what they strictly say' (p.43). In other words, both theologians were aware of the need for hermeneutics.

The thrust of the book is the similarity between Calvin and Schleiermacher. DeVries is, of course, well aware of the differences and acknowledges, for instance, that Calvin unlike Schleiermacher assumes that the events described in the biblical narratives happened the way they are told. But the significance of the differences is minimised. Schleiermacher preached about miracles stories 'as if they were true.' 'Does that make Schleiermacher the preacher dishonest? Or is he simply following the same interpretative strategy that Calvin used in his sermons on the Gospels?' (p.84). But the strategies are very different. Calvin accepted the truth of the stories, but placed more emphasis on applying their significance to his hearers; Schleiermacher did not accept their truth, but nonetheless sought to edify his hearers from the stories. This not the same interpretative strategy as Calvin's.

The author also fails to distinguish clearly enough between different types of historical issue. Take two that she mentions, the question of whether John records the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus and the question of whether Jesus actually rose from the dead. These are very different questions. There is evidence from Calvin's treatment of critical issues in his commentaries to suggest that he would not have been troubled by the suggestion that the Johannine discourses involve John's interpretation of Jesus' teaching as well as a verbatim record of it. There is no shortage of evidence from Calvin's writings to demonstrate that he would have totally repudiated the suggestion that the virgin birth, the resurrection and the ascension were not real events. Here there remains a gulf between Calvin and Schleiermacher which no amount of similarity in hermeneutical approach can bridge. It may be true for both theologians that 'the sermon does not merely point back to saving events that happened in the life of the Jesus of history, but rather itself conveys, or is the medium of, the presence of Christ in the church' (p.95). But there is all the difference in the world between 'does not merely point back to saving events that happened' and 'does not point back to saving events that actually happened.'

This is a stimulating book which opens up an inadequately explored area of Calvin's theology and points to elements of continuity between Calvin and Schleiermacher, but which gives inadequate coverage of the gulf that remains.

A. N. S. Lane, London Bible College

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Kenneth J. Collins, *A Real Christian: The Life of John Wesley*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999. Pp. 184. \$20.00.

Here is a book with an honest title, for it is both a brief biography and a theological interpretation of John Wesley. Dr. Collins, professor of church history at Asbury Theological Seminary, uses just ten chapters (159 pages) to summarize Wesley's life around a central theological motif. "A real Christian" is what Wesley strove to be in his adult years, and it was his life's passion to guide others to be "real Christians."

The author makes a strong case that this theme begins in Wesley's Oxford student years, especially from 1725 onward, and holds consistently to his death in 1791. It began as a term for religious earnestness in contrast to many at the time who were Christian in name only. Wesley's Aldersgate experience would bring a cluster of theological issues to the meaning of "real Christianity," including justification by faith, regeneration, assurance of salvation, and sanctification, but the term served well on either side of Aldersgate.

It has been this cluster of doctrines which has produced controversy in Wesleyan studies through the years, with particular vigor since 1988 (the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Aldersgate). Professor Collins has been at the heart of this controversy since that time, defending the traditional view that May 24, 1738, was the time of Wesley's "evangelical conversion." This book is perhaps his best explanation of these views.

Those who are not acquainted with this debate among Wesley scholars will be at some disadvantage in understanding the book's detailed arguments about degrees of faith, aspects of sin, and types of the assurance of salvation. Dr. Collins utilizes the full scope of Wesley's writings to explain both his consistent doctrine and his developing pastoral modifications on these issues. He rightly emphasizes both the stance of the mature Wesley and the outlook of Wesley's sermons. For while Wesley's more private comments reflect his pastoral approach to doctrine, his sermons are his best guide to his actual doctrinal convictions. The book achieves a plausible defense of Wesley's evangelical thought.

Ordinary readers will find a helpful introduction to Wesley's life. As a biography the book covers the essential periods and events of his life, without losing the reader in historical detail. It is a candid account as reflected in the balanced, but critical, narrative of Wesley's relationship with his wife Molly (pp. 91-97, 110-111, 124-126). Also it is just when discussing Wesley's conflicts with the Calvinists, especially his sometime colleague, George Whitfield. Readers should finish the book acquainted with the major contours of the Wesley story, while sensing the issues that were closer to his heart.

Overall, the book's greatest strength is defining what for Wesley constituted "real Christianity," and doing so in an irenic spirit that commends Dr. Collins' interpretation. Its weakness might be the attempt to combine theological interpretation with biography. Readers who find the biography helpful may be confused with the theological

arguments. Specialists, on the other hand, will be drawn to the theological interpretations without the need for the biographical summary. All readers, however, can profit from the book, but they will need to push through material which does not serve their interests.

Ordinarily, one does not expect a brief biography to inform a specialist in his own subject area. However, I found this book to be both informative and insightful about Wesley's life and his theology. And, thus, I recommend it to others who want to know John Wesley.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

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Vigen Guroian. *Inheriting Paradise: Meditations on Gardening*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999. 135 pp., paper, \$12.00.

*"I am a theologian and a college professor. I like being both. But what I really love to do — what I get exquisite pleasure from doing — is to garden. I think that gardening is nearer to godliness than theology."* So writes Vigen Guroian, author of this brief book of theological meditations stemming from his enjoyment of gardening. In many ways this is a predictable book as it, of course, contemplates a garden through the seasons of the year in contrast to the church seasons. Guroian comes from an Armenian Orthodox background so the book reflects church celebrations such as the Assumption of Mary which are foreign to the American Protestant tradition.

I am not a gardener myself, but I do have my own "sermon garden" in which ideas are planted and grow under cover of darkness. Planting thoughts from this book might "spring forth" some good homiletical sprouts. One is reminded for example that much of our Protestant tradition ignores "thinking green." We abuse nature without thought. Ecology is far from a primary concern. Guroian reminds one that it is time to "commune with the trees, to relate to mountains as animate, to live in balance with the air, to feel a sense of give and take with the soil and the rocks." I might let Guroian help me with a sermon or two...and, on the side, I might plant some tomatoes this spring and then observe what happens.

Cliff Stewart

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Laurence Hall Stookey, *Calendar: Christ's Time for the Church*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.

In many ways this book is written solely for churches which base worship patterns on the traditional church year. Yet, there are parts of this book which would be applicable to non liturgical churches. After all, don't most Christians celebrate the chief festival of the church year? What is that festival you ask? Easter? Pentecost? Stookey suggests that the chief festival of the church year is our weekly Sabbath! Interesting insights abound in this book. For example, the author asks if the Sabbath is the first day of the week or the eighth day (signifying redemption.)

Cliff Stewart



Charles B. Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan: Religion and the State, 1660-1990*. Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1999, 233 pp., hardback, \$36.00.

Charles Jones spent more than three years living in Taiwan, conducting research for this book and for journal articles about religion on the island. He is currently on the faculty of the Department of Religion at the Catholic University of America. Jones' primary focus on the history of Chinese Buddhism as an organized religion in Taiwan from the mid-1600s to the late 1980s. This is a much needed study because most literature on Chinese Buddhism is based on Mainland Chinese Buddhism. Only in the last decade has there been a shift to focus on Taiwan Buddhism as a separate entity apart from seeing it only as an extension of Mainland Chinese Buddhism.

The book is conveniently organized into three major historical eras. Part One is titled: "The Ming and Qing Dynasty (1660-1895)". This section, only one chapter, mainly focuses on the arrival and early development of Buddhism in Taiwan. Part Two is titled: "The Japanese Colonial Period (1895-1945)". This section, two chapters, focuses on the advent of Japanese Buddhism on the island along with its impact on Taiwan's Buddhism. Part Three is titled: "From Retrocession to the Modern Period (1945-1990)". This is the largest section of the book, with four chapters. I found this section to be more detailed and interesting than the previous two sections. I will devote the remainder of this book review to this last section.

In Part Three of his book, Jones begins with a chapter on the retrocession (the period at the end of World War II when Japan was forced out of Taiwan), and the arrival of the Mainland Buddhist monks to Taiwan. This chapter showed the emergence of an organized Buddhism that started to develop under the oversight of the Buddhist Association of the Republic of China (BAROC), which began prior to World War II in Mainland China, but relocated to Taiwan with the National government in 1949. This chapter also addresses the power struggles within Buddhism between a traditionalist faction led by Yuanying, and a reformist faction led by Taixu. In the end, the struggle ultimately resolved in favor of the traditionalists. This has led to Taiwan Buddhism that inclines toward conservatism.

Chapter five focuses entirely on the Buddhist Association of the Republic of China (BAROC). It is neatly organized into two major sections, "The early period, 1949-1960" and "The middle period, 1960-1986". Under the early period, Jones does a good job explaining the BAROC's organization, mission, and activities. I found the most interesting part to be under the subtitle "The vitality of the nun's order after 1952". In this small but fascinating section, Jones tries to answer the question, "Why have nuns increasingly come to predominate numerically over monks?" It's interesting to note that this situation exists only in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

The second half of the chapter, the middle period, 1960-1986, focuses on the leadership of the BAROC under Baisheng. From 1960 when Baisheng became president of BAROC until his death in 1986, Baisheng remained a controlling presence in BAROC affairs, despite not holding the presidency contentiously during this period. Also in this section, Jones highlights the internationalism of Taiwanese Buddhism under the leadership of Baisheng, which was seen in the ordinations of foreign monks and through the involvement of BAROC in international Buddhism organizations. This chapter also covers the continual struggle to regain possession of Japanese-era Temples.

The only weakness of this section is Jones spending too much time, seven pages, on the regaining possession of Japanese-era Temples.

Lastly, in chapter five, Jones ends with a subtitled section called "Criticisms of the BAROC". The largest criticisms leveled against the BAROC was: (1) it failed to become the unifying force for Taiwan Buddhism that it might have been; and (2) it defended an elitist attitude at the national level, where only a very small, closed group of people had the actual decision-making authority. One would have liked Jones to have written more than two and half pages for his closing remarks on the BAROC.

Chapter six, "The Period of Pluralization" was the most informative and the one I found the most interesting. In the past, the BAROC was the only "ruling" body of Buddhism in Taiwan; but in the last several decades, there has been a growth of other Buddhist organization and groups. Jones explains when and why this pluralization took place, and what it means for Buddhism in Taiwan.

He spends most of this section examining the two largest alternative Buddhist organizations on the island: Fo Kuang Shan, founded by Xingyun and the Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Association (BCRTCA), founded by the Buddhist nun, Zhengyan. Jones does an excellent job explaining the background of the two founders. He also summarizes the history, structure and impact of the two alternative Buddhist organizations. He ends this chapter by mentioning the current Buddhist group established by Shengyan, which is centered at the Dharma Drum Mountain near the northeast seacoast. This new organization, along with BAROC, Fo Kuang Shan and the BCRTCA, are the four most stable and well-supported of the Buddhist organizations, at this time.

If you are looking for a book on the theology, anthropology or sociology of Taiwan Buddhism, this is not the book for you. What Jones does in this unique book, is to focus on the institutional and political aspects of the history of Chinese Buddhism in Taiwan. He does an excellent job on giving a clear in-depth history of Buddhism in Taiwan, with its history derived from a unique set of historical and environmental circumstances. I would have liked Jones to touch on the growing presence in Taiwan of Theravada Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism, along with a little more detail on the activities of Japanese Buddhists during the fifty-year period when Taiwan was part of the Japanese empire. Nevertheless, the strengths outweigh the weaknesses of this book. The last section of about 130 pages, "From Retrocession to the Modern Period (1945-1990)", is worth the price of the whole book. If you are serious about understanding the current milieu of Buddhism in Taiwan today, just like the Apostle Paul was serious about understanding the current milieu of his ministry (e.g. Acts 17 in Athens), this is an invaluable resource. Robert Branch, World Team Mission (OMF)

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Konrad Volk, *A Sumerian Reader*. Studia Pohl: Series Maior, 18. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1997. xviii + 113 pp., paper, \$20.00.

Sumerian, arguably the first written language, is probably the least well-known of those from the ancient Near East. Its relative obscurity is partly due to its lack of familial relationship with any other known language, especially including any of its Semitic neighbors. Being an agglutinative language, it is also linguistically different

from any language most students would ever have encountered previously. A third hindrance to its understanding is a paucity of adequate tools for teaching it. This slim volume seeks to help in this third area, and well fulfills its purpose.

As the title suggests, the work is not a grammar of Sumerian, and no grammatical help is given in it. For this the reader is well-served by M.L. Thomsen's admirable *The Sumerian Language. An Introduction to its History and Grammatical Structure*. Mesopotamia 10 (Copenhagen, 1984). What the volume does provide is 44 royal, legal and economic texts in copy form. A number of these also have transliterations, though no translations. Several of the earlier texts also provide a transcription into Neo-Assyrian script. This is to aid students who follow the customary route into Sumerian, which is to learn Akkadian first, and then turn to Sumerian. There is also a useful sign-list which is organized in the order of the more familiar Neo-Assyrian sign forms. The signs used in the book are listed in various forms in chronological order. Phonetic values are provided, as are reference numbers to R. Labat's *Manuel d'épigraphie akkadienne*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Paris, 1976). A separate list of phonetic values in alphabetical order and a glossary of Sumerian terms and Akkadian equivalents with English gloss conclude the book.

I hope that this little book will help students interested in language, the ancient Near East, and the Old Testament to take up the challenge of learning Sumerian. Its literature provides the background to the world of the patriarchs and had great effect on many biblical genres. The volume will find a place in academic libraries and in some seminaries.

David W. Baker

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William G. Hopper, *An Index to English Periodical Literature on the Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern Studies*, vol. 7, ATLA Bibliography Series, 21. Lanham/London: American Theological Library Association/Scarecrow Press, 1998. xlii + 378 pp.

This volume is a labor of love by an author who is not professionally involved in academia. The series spans over a decade, and its content is clearly indicated by the title. This volume covers ancient Near Eastern literature. It provides a simple bibliography of relevant texts, following abbreviation lists which cover 30 pages.

Following entries entitled "Ancient Near eastern Literature - General Studies" (30 entries), "The Development of Literature - General Studies" (12 entries), and "Papyrology - General Studies" (over 4 pages of entries), there are sections on: Afro-Asiatic, which is mainly restricted to Egyptian (75 pages, including Coptic); Semitic, including West Semitic (Proto-Sinaitic, Canaanite, Ammonite, Edomite, Hebrew, Moabite, Phoenician, Aramaic, and Ugaritic) and East Semitic (Akkadian, which has subdivisions according to form critical categories, others according to peripheral find sites such as Mari and Nuzi, and others under Assyrian and Babylonian; Sumerian, under which are oddly placed Urartian and South Semitic; and finally "Caucasian Texts (Aryan family)' which includes Elamite, Hurrian, Hittite, Greek, Cypriote, Mycenaean/Minoan, Latin, Persian, 'other literature', and a section on forgeries.

While there might have been more of a philosophical and methodological introduction in the first volume of the series, one is not provided here, and it is sorely lacking. Entries are not annotated, and selection criteria are very unclear. Under the



Siloam Inscription, for example, there are 33 entries ranging in date from 1880 to 1940. Numerous essential articles since that date are thus ignored. Unfortunately, the impression is of serendipity, articles that might have been randomly encountered while browsing rather than of a well researched, comprehensive collection. Possibly the collection was just to be of older works (since almost all entries predate 1970), but that is not the impression given by the title.

The volume, and presumably the series as a whole, should be in research level academic libraries, but will need constant supplementation by the researcher. A truly comprehensive bibliography of biblical and ancient Near Eastern studies as a great desideratum, and should be a project which could attract grant funding, essential since the task is mammoth. This volume does not go very far toward meeting this need.

David W. Baker

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Martha T. Roth, *Law Collections for Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. Writings from the Ancient World Series 6. Atlanta: Scholars, 1995. Xviii + 283 pp., \$59.95 (cloth), \$39.95 (paper).

Gary Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*. Writings from the Ancient World Series 7. Atlanta: Scholars, 1996. Xx + 206 pp., \$45.00 (cloth), \$29.95 (paper).

The biblical text is only a small representative of the written material from the ancient Near East which dates from the three millennia before Christ. While itself uniquely important for theological and historical reasons, the Bible can be illuminated, and its understanding facilitated, by looking at contemporary literature from similar genres. The goal of this series is to provide such comparative literature.

Roth is professor of Assyriology at the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago. She collects laws written in the Near East in Sumerian (the non-Semitic language which was arguably the first ever written), Babylonian and Assyrian (Semitic "sister" languages found mainly in Mesopotamia, present-day Iraq), and Hittite (the Indo-European language used in Asia Minor/Turkey). The latter are edited by Harry Hoffner, also of the Oriental Institute. All texts are translated into English in a parallel column with the transcription from the original. There are also text-critical and legal notes on the various laws. To aid in placing the pieces in their environment, Roth provides a chronological tables of Mesopotamian empires (there being no sign of the Hittites here), two maps, a brief note on weights and measures, and a brief introduction to the writing systems and the form and function of legal codes. The volume ends with a listing of the sources for the laws, glossarys, bibliographies, and subject indexes.

Beckman's volume, edited by Hoffner, contains the same elements, apart from the transliterations from Hittite. His selection of texts includes treaties, diplomatic correspondence, and miscellaneous texts such as edicts, tribute inventories and letters. The notes included here are much more minimal than in the Roth volume. There are three maps, and a chronological chart which, though brief, looks at the entire ancient Near East.

These volumes supply the grist for the mill of comparative study. They supply simply the texts, and do not suggest any specific parallels to biblical passages. In fact,

the lack of Scripture index is a good sign that the ancient world, rather than the Bible, is the focus of the material. This type of tool is a necessary first step in providing the raw data, before any comparative synthesis can be undertaken. The authors and publisher are to be thanked for doing an admirable job of completing their brief. Now it is up to others to use these helpful tools to take the next step. The series will find a place in technical and academic libraries, but most church or pastoral libraries would probably find more use for the Hallo-Younger series reviewed elsewhere in this *Journal*.

David W. Baker

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Othmar Keel and Christoph Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998. xiii + 466 pp., cloth, \$45.00.

Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, Pieter W. van der Horst, ed., *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition. Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans and Leiden/Boston: Brill, 1999. xxxviii + 960 pp., cloth, \$120.00.

Those interested in the religion of Israel have in these two fascinating volumes. The editors of the *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible (DDD)*, all from Holland, have gathered 106 contributors from around the world to produce a very important volume. There are numerous articles on topics expected due to the volume title, e.g. Anat, Antichrist, Artemis, Asherah, Baal, Jesus, and Yahweh. The title is misleading however, since there are other articles that, while useful, would not be expected, e.g. arm, Edom (and numerous other places), and Ma'at (an Egyptian religious concept not mentioned in the Bible), and Khonsu (an Egyptian deity mentioned in 3 Maccabees). This indicates that you get more than expected, rather than less.

Some of the authors are theological conservatives, but many approach their topic from a critical understanding of Scripture, so their contributions, such as that by Zeller on Jesus, will need to be read with that in mind. Each article has a bibliography, often quite lengthy, which allows those whose interest is piqued to pursue the matter further.

As a sample article, consider that by J.C. Greenfield on 'Hadad,' running 5 pages and with a bibliography of 30 items in English, French, and German. Greenfield traces Hadad chronologically as well as geographically, looking at his manifestations in Mesopotamia and Syria from the Old Akkadian period (late 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC) through the Hellenistic period, when he becomes identified with Zeus. His iconography (pictorial representation) and theology, as well as his exploits, and consorts, are introduced. The article is so full that most readers would find everything they would be interested in knowing, except perhaps for a picture of the deity.

The volume is an excellent reference tool which will be read with fascination. Its price will probably limit it to libraries, but all serious biblical studies collections should have it on their shelves.

*Gods' Goddesses, and Images of God* by Keel and Uehlinger can supply, among other things, some of the illustrations lacking in *DDD*. The authors, both Swiss, are experts in ancient Near Eastern iconography, and use that expertise to advantage in this volume. Not only do they study the deities mentioned in the biblical text, but also use the texts and illustration from over 8,500 stamp seals from Israel and environs.

The first chapter starts with the problem which is raised by some of the extra-biblical texts which might indicate that Israel was polytheistic, since they refer to "Yahweh...and his Asherah." They then present the sources of the evidence bearing on the question, discussing symbolism, textual and image sources, and archaeology. They divide their discussion of the evidence chronologically, having discrete chapters on "Equality of the Sexes: Middle Bronze Age IIB" (mid- second millennium BC), "Egyptian Colonialism and the Prevalence of Political and war deities: Late Bronze Age" (mid-late second millennium), "The Hidden God, Victorious Gods, and the Blessing of Fertility: Iron Age I" (13th-11th centuries), "Anthropomorphic Deities Recede and are Replaced by their Attribute Animals and Entities: Iron Age IIA" (11th-10th centuries), "Baal, El, Yahweh, and "His Asherah" in the Context of Egyptian Solar and Royal Imagery: Iron Age IIB" (the United Monarchy period, covering over 100 pages), "The Astralization of the Heavenly Powers, the Revival of the Goddess, and the Orthodox reaction: Iron Age IIC" (the Divided Monarchy period, almost a hundred pages), "The Era Ends: Iron Age III (c. 598-450 BC), and "Summary and Conclusion."

All told, we have very interesting, and well illustrated, with over 600 drawings) picture of religion in Israel, which shows that the orthodox ideal is not always the actual belief and practice of the people. The book, which should be readable by the educated, interested student of the Bible, is also valuable for the scholar, and both will benefit from the 34 page bibliography. The volume should be in every academic library, but will also find a useful place on the shelves of those interested in studying and seeing the world of the Bible.

David W. Baker

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J. H. Charlesworth and W. P. Weaver (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Christian Faith* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998. xviii + 76 pp. \$12.00.

This slim volume contains four essays presented at a symposium on the Dead Sea Scrolls and Christian origins at Florida Southern College, Lakeland. This is the fifth collection to come out of these Faith and Scholarship Colloquies hosted annually by that college.

Joseph Fitzmyer discusses the importance and privileged status of the texts discovered in the caves near Khirbet Qumran for the study of early Christianity, since this library provides our widest window into the world of Palestinian Judaism at the turn of the era. He also surveys a number of dead ends and blind alleys into which scholars have run in the course of relating the Dead Sea Scrolls to Christian origins. John Collins offers a summary of the kinds of Messianism found in the scrolls, having just published an excellent book-length volume on the topic (*The Scepter and the Star*). This is an especially rich and important contribution, making accessible in short compass the resources of his larger work. David Noel Freedman discusses the nature of prophecy in the Hebrew Scriptures, Qumran (where it surfaces as "authoritative interpretation" of the Hebrew Scriptures), and the New Testament. Freedman rightly and helpfully notes the connections that such investigations have with the modern religious landscape, where many sectarian boundaries and other walls of division are maintained by means of claiming an authoritative interpretation of sacred tradition to the exclusion of alternative interpretations. The book concludes with an essay by James Charlesworth



on the import of the Dead Sea Scrolls for Christian faith. He dispels many of the myths concerning the alleged dangers the scrolls contain for traditional faith and attests rather personally to the ways in which his own faith has grown through their study.

The book is recommended as a sort of substitute for sitting in on a morning's seminar with four internationally recognized giants in the field of biblical studies. It provides a mini-continuing-education experience for those whose exposure to the Dead Sea Scrolls has been rather limited. If the reader is looking for a single volume on the scrolls as an introduction, however, this would probably not be the book to purchase (where James VanderKam's *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* remains the best brief introduction to the material and its relevance for both the study of the Hebrew Scriptures and New Testament).

David A. deSilva

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Walter A. Elwell and Robert W. Yarbrough, *Reading From the First-Century World: Primary Sources for New Testament Study*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998, 223 pp.

Elwell and Yarbrough have compiled this collection of primary texts (mainly Jewish texts, with selections from Greco-Roman authors less well represented) from the Intertestamental Period as a companion volume to their *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998). They intend it to provide first- or second-year undergraduate students with an elementary grounding in the cultural, historical, and religious environment within which the early church took shape and the New Testament texts were written. The first half of the book follows a principle of organization quite appropriate for the Gospels: rather than attempt to provide comparative texts for each Gospel in succession, the texts are collected in chapters on the land of Palestine, the history of the Jewish people from Antiochus IV Epiphanes through the First Jewish Revolt, Jewish sects and groups, Jewish religious life, Jewish religious ideas, and texts about Jesus outside the New Testament. This does have the benefit of presenting the relevant material once rather than four times, but also has the distinct disadvantage of not allowing students to view, for example, specific teachings of Jesus against the background of similar teachings in Ben Sira or *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. Providing some section of this sort would have helped students to see that Jesus himself resonated not only with the thought-world of the Old Testament but also incorporated teachings developed only during the Intertestamental period into his own ethic. Nevertheless, a number of important Jewish backgrounds to Jesus' pronouncements and teachings are very well covered (e.g., the meaning and legislation of Sabbath, the variety of messianism and eschatology during the Intertestamental Period, the centrality of the *Shema*). A Scripture Index at the end allows a student to find material relevant to particular Gospel passages.

The second half of the book proceeds in canonical order from Acts through Revelation, offering comparative or background material to specific New Testament passages with a brief paragraph by the editors suggesting possible connections or significance. Although the balance between Jewish and pagan texts is better in this half, some remarkable opportunities to lay out the points of contact between, for example, ethical topics and images shared by Greco-Roman moralists and New Testament moral

instruction have been missed. In general, the work shows a marked preference for seeking out Old Testament and Jewish backgrounds, bringing in Greco-Roman texts mainly as points of *contrast* rather than as points of possible positive influence. I would have preferred to see less space given to texts from the Old Testament (references for the student should have been sufficient, for I would assume a full Bible to be a required textbook for any OT or NT survey course) and more given to Greco-Roman comparative material (texts illuminating ethical virtues and impediments to virtue, cultural phenomena like patronage, Roman Imperial ideology, and the like).

Given the purposes for which the editors have explicitly made their selection, this book is commendable. Undergraduate surveys in New Testament would do well to include it. The organization is better suited to such courses than C. K. Barrett's *The New Testament Background: Selected Documents* (NY: Harper, 1961) and much more appropriate in terms of cost than the more fulsome collection by Eugene M. Boring *et al.*, *Hellenistic Commentary to the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995). It might also serve well as a Primer for those seminarians and pastors whose acquaintance with the world of the NT has been somewhat limited. If it is used exactly as intended, namely as a launching-pad for further and wider investigation of the Greco-Roman and Jewish environments of the early church, it will be well-used. David A. deSilva

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Helmut Koester, ed., *Pergamon, Citadel of the Gods: Archaeological Record, Literary Description, and Religious Development*. Harvard Theological Studies 46, Trinity Press International, 1998. Hb; xx + 444pp + fold out map

James S. Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era: Exploring the Background of Early Christianity*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1999. Pb; 352pp

In a modern world where the most recent attempt to bring something of antiquity alive to a modern audience is the blockbuster movie *Gladiator*, how might an author seek to convey something of a world now gone through a mere book which cannot use special effects? One approach might be that of a synthesis, drawing together a wide range of material in general terms and so taking a text-book approach that says something about the whole, and which encourages the reader to read further in areas of particular interest. That is Jeffers' approach. Another is to make a focused examination of one place or topic. Such is the approach of Koester and his team who focus on the city of Pergamon in Asia Minor.

Jeffers' work is addressed to the non-scholar and to the Christian who wishes to avoid the pitfall of reading the values and ideas of contemporary society into the societies out of which the New Testament emerged. The book reproduces a number of photographs and these help to bring alive the text. So too there are clear maps at the end, and the final chapter provides a helpful overview of the empire arranged by province and by city. Readers might benefit from moving straight from chapter one to chapter thirteen and the following two appendices, for together these form a useful chronological and geographical framework in which the content of the rest of the book (which ranges widely through time and space) might more readily be appreciated.

Jeffers' account of Roman and Hellenistic customs offers both specific examples and general observations. He chooses to avoid intimidating the beginner with an abundance of detail, but this reviewer did find that the decision to make only infrequent use of end-notes giving references to back up sometimes very general observations became increasingly frustrating. The topics covered are comprehensive, and Jeffers ranges widely across political, religious, social and economic history. More space is given to the domestic and everyday life that is likely to have been the urban context of the early Christians outside Palestine than is given to the situation in Palestine itself, although the opening chapter gives an excellent insight into the very Greco-Roman environment that was found in at least some quarters of first century Jerusalem. Perhaps some discussion here of the excavations in the Herodian quarter of Jerusalem would have been useful, for it is a significant observation that these Second-Temple houses are in many respects similar to those that might be found anywhere in the Roman Empire.

Questions might be raised as to how well Jeffers succeeds in his stated aims of avoiding anachronistic readings of Scripture and of making accurate details available to the general reader. On the first point, Jeffers makes a number of attempts to differentiate between modern North American presuppositions and those of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire. To this (non-North American) reader some are helpful, as for example in his discussion of the ancient conceptions of honor and of class, or in the comparison of the imperial cult and modern US civil-religion (p. 103). So too it is useful that he distinguishes between the modern concept of legal separation and the situation to which Paul refers in 1 Corinthians 7: 15 (p. 247). Other instances are less helpful however, particularly when they seem to affect issues that are contentious today. Thus in light of sometimes difficult Christian-Muslim relationships the comparison between the power of husbands in ancient Rome to that of husbands today in "fundamentalist Islamic nations" (p. 242) seems unfortunate, and the reference on p. 224 to men who kept male slaves for sex as "homosexuals" appears to use a modern term in an anachronistic way. Hence the latter statement begs a number of questions and glosses over an important contemporary debate in a way that might be thought misleading. By way of contrast, some of the most helpful insights to a contemporary reader of the New Testament arise simply by explaining first century beliefs without reference to modern beliefs, for example in the discussion of citizenship in the context of Philippians 3: 20 (p. 209).

On the second point, a number of mistakes on points of detail do raise questions about the value of some of the generalisations made in the book. The quotation on p. 29 from Juvenal (apparently copied inaccurately from Peter Green's Penguin translation) is from a book of poems entitled the *Satires*, not the *Saturnalia*. The *Saturnalia* was a Roman festival. Archelaus was exiled to the Rhone valley (p. 127) but the Rhone is in France, not Germany. The repeated reference to Hellenist on p. 242 and p. 248 as a noun for someone living in the Hellenistic world is jarring. So too there are unfortunate spelling errors in ancient proper names: Ovid wrote the *Metamorphoses* (p. 241) and the family who led the revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes were the *Maccabees* (p. 219). It seems surprising to be told on p. 199 that a Roman citizen was not subject to crucifixion, when on p. 158 we were told that it was inflicted on citizens from time to time. Strictly speaking these two statements are not contradictory of course, and in a huge administration such as that of the Roman Empire there is no doubt that practice and



theory did not always mirror each other exactly, but the apparent inconsistency here does point to a weakness that arises from frequent generalization.

Returning to an assessment of the book as a whole, Jeffers provides an accessible way in to the background of the New Testament, and this is to be welcomed. Frequent reference to the text of the New Testament allows the reader who is more familiar with the New Testament than with any other ancient literature to feel that the world to which he is introduced is perhaps not so foreign as to be inaccessible. This book will serve this aspect of stated purpose of its author for it offers such readers enough of a perspective on the ancient world to aid them in their understanding of Scripture for today, although its value for the serious student is not so clear.

Koester's volume is very different. Intended for a serious academic audience, some of its essays make available in English the results of archaeological excavations at Pergamon which previously were only in German. Other essays interpret archaeological and literary evidence in an attempt to cast light on religious belief and practice. Evidence from the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods is addressed in a wide-ranging discussion which considers the city both as part of the world in which early Christianity emerged and as part of the world which Christianity influenced in turn. It is impossible to do justice to the collection as a whole, so instead we shall list the contents of the volume before turning to a brief discussion of three chapters which discuss Pergamene evidence for the imperial cult. The topics addressed are as follows:

CHAPTER 1 Recent Research in and about Pergamon: A Survey (ca. 1987-1997) Wolfgang Radt; CHAPTER 2 The Roman Remodeling of the Asklepieion, Adolf Hoffmann; CHAPTER 3 Aelius Aristides and the Asklepieion, Christopher Jones; CHAPTER 4 The "Red Hall" (Kizil Avlu) in Pergamon, Klaus Nohlen; CHAPTER 5 The Cult of the Egyptian Deities in Asia Minor Helmut Koester; CHAPTER 6 The Architecture of the Great Altar of Pergamon, Volker Kastner; CHAPTER 7 Pergamon in Early Christian Literature; Adela Yarbro Collins; CHAPTER 8 The Library of Pergamon as a Classical Model, Gregory Nagy; CHAPTER 9 The Zeus Philios and Trajan Temple: A Context for Imperial Honors, Daniel N. Schowalter; CHAPTER 10 Beneath the Gaze of the Gods: The Pergamon Evidence for a Developing Theology of Empire, Marianne Palmer Bonz; CHAPTER 11 The Sanctuary of Demeter at Pergamon: Cultic Space for Women and Its Eclipse, Christine M. Thomas; CHAPTER 12 The Hellenistic and Roman Houses of Pergamon, Ulrike Wulf-Rheidt; CHAPTER 13 Counting the Costs of Nobility: The Social Economy of Roman Pergamon, L. Michael White; CHAPTER 14 Homonoia Politics in Asia Minor: The Example of Pergamon, Ursula Kampmann; CHAPTER 15 In the Shadow of Antiquity: Pergamon and the Byzantine Millennium Klaus Rheidt.

Turning to the volume's discussion of the imperial cult, Adela Yarbro Collins, who surveys the few references to Pergamon in early Christian literature, begins with Revelation 2 and then moves on to early Christian martyrdom literature which Revelation may have influenced. Literary evidence is linked with archaeological evidence, and she argues that the reference in Revelation to the throne of Satan may be a reference to a temple complex which included the Sanctuaries of Zeus and of Athena in addition to the Great Altar. Linked closely to this is her suggestion that the combat myth of Revelation finds a physical counterpart in the combat myth depicted on the panels of the Great Altar, and Collins offers the suggestion that although the frieze on

the altar was carved in the second century BCE when it was intended to depict the victory of the Attalids over the Gauls, nevertheless it may later have been interpreted as depicting the victories of the Romans. Thus it is the physical depiction of Roman imperial might as seen on the altar that Revelation subverts in its own literary use of the combat myth.

Other authors also reflect on the value of archaeological evidence for understanding the imperial cult. Schowalter finds that evidence from Pergamon points (perhaps not surprisingly) to belief in the East of a closer relationship between the emperor and the gods than was found in Rome and the West. Thus he points to the importance of regional perspectives within the wider empire. Further reflection on the physical propaganda of the imperial cult is offered by an examination of the temple of Trajan by M M Bonz. There are difficulties in deciding which elements are Trajanic and which Hadrianic, but Bonz points to a number of similarities between the Trajaneum in Pergamon and the Arch of Beneventum in Rome. Thus the Trajaneum in Pergamon conveys an ideological message to the cities and provinces of the Greek East corresponding to that which the Arch of Beneventum communicates to the inhabitants of Italy and the provinces of the West. Each “visually communicates the message of imperial benevolence and protection that is rooted in the emperor’s immediate access to the divine source of ultimate power”.

This is an excellent specialist work, and its utility is enhanced by 75 plates, numerous figures, a helpful glossary and a fold-out map of the site. Andrew Gregory

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William Morrice, *Hidden Sayings of Jesus: Words Attributed to Jesus outside the Four Gospels*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997. viii + 247 pp.

Readers of the New Testament will be aware of sayings attributed to Jesus that appear outside of the Gospels, for example, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts) and the prophetic voice of Jesus speaking in Revelation 2 and 3. Morrice seeks to acquaint readers rather more broadly with all known sayings attributed to Jesus outside the canonical gospels. He begins with variants found in some ancient manuscripts of the Gospels, such as the addition to the Lord’s Prayer “Let your Holy Spirit come upon us and purify us” (Luke 11:2 in codex 700), moves through the Egerton and Oxyrrynchus papyri, the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas* (which accounts for perhaps half the contents of the book), New Testament apocrypha (like the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*), early Church Fathers, Jewish-Christian sectarian works, and sayings attributed to Jesus in Arabic texts. In a manner reminiscent of the Jesus Seminar’s program, Morrice rates each saying (A through D, A denoting probable authenticity). This extensive survey is prefaced with a brief but helpful narrative on how the New Testament canon came to be shaped, a consideration of how one can responsibly use apocryphal sayings, and some methodological tests for determining authenticity. At the end of the volume, Morrice surveys the conclusions of earlier scholars who sifted through these attributed sayings for the kernels of what might actually go back to Jesus, offering his own conclusions, which are on the whole modest and judicious.

I find this book helpful insofar as Morrice has collected into one place these sayings from diverse sources, many of which would be less than readily accessible to

the general reader. I would have wished for more precision in discussion of potential authenticity. Morrice is generous in assigning "C" and "D" ratings (with which I would concur), reserving, in theory, "A" and "B" ratings for those sayings that are either close in wording to canonical sayings or that are attested in different streams of tradition. Unfortunately, the element of subjectivity is strong here. For example, a saying of Jesus known from the canonical gospels is paralleled in *Thomas* and expanded. Morrice thinks this expansion to show *Thomas* to be independent of the canonical gospels. I would rather think the expansion to be a dead give-away that *Thomas* is simply expanding a dominical saying, not presenting an independent version. Similarly, Morrice assigns "A" ratings to some sayings preserved in the church fathers that resemble closely a canonical saying. Here again, however, the interpretative expansions stand out as a sign of scribal expansion of the canonical saying, not a potential alternative version of the saying. It might have been more helpful to use these sayings as indications of how early Christians interpreted, understood, applied, or retold the shorter, canonical sayings.

I would recommend the book, therefore, as a well-organized and winsomely presented collection of non-canonical sayings attributed to Jesus, merely urging readers to seek further discussion of the potentially authentic sayings in the more detailed works discussed by Morrice in his final chapter.

David A. deSilva

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John J. Rousseau and Rami Arav, *Jesus and His World: An Archaeological and Cultural Dictionary*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995. xxiii + 392 pp.

Rousseau and Arav, both personally involved in the direction of the excavations at Bethsaida and Research Associates in Archaeology, have provided a valuable introduction to the archaeology, industry, and material culture of first-century Palestine. There is extensive treatment of Jerusalem and the Temple, as well as fine articles on the majority of sites named in the four Gospels (as well as others not named, but nevertheless important sources of archaeological and cultural information). The authors also present articles on the material culture of the period. One will find valuable information on the industries pursued at the time of Jesus (e.g., leatherworking, agriculture, medicine, fishing, and their appurtenances) as well as other aspects of the physical realities encountered by Jesus and his neighbors (e.g., coins, boats, clothing, and the like). The articles follow a common outline: a brief statement about the topic's importance, references in Scripture to the topic, general information, archaeological information, relevance for Jesus research, and a bibliography for the entry. This format certainly serves to focus the discussion (as well as the reader) on how the information serves to refine or enrich one's reading of the Gospels. Additionally, the entries are complemented by photographs, site and building plans, maps, and other artists' reconstructions.

The foreword by James Robinson shows a certain predilection for the reconstructed sayings gospel "Q" as an historical source on Jesus' life and a corresponding suspicion of the reliability of the canonical Gospels. Moreover, Rousseau collaborated in the project known as the Jesus Seminar, whose findings have been less than well received by evangelical scholarship. Nevertheless, the authors of this book



appear to make every effort to be even-handed and judicious (rather than lightly dismissive) in their assessments of how the archaeology of Palestine sheds light on the historical Jesus. I would recommend the book particularly as a resource for those who plan to travel in the Holy Land as an indispensable guide to the sites they will visit (or should visit!).

David A. deSilva

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Graham N. Stanton and Guy G. Stroumsa (eds.), *Tolerance and Intolerance in early Judaism and Christianity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. 384 pages. \$69.95.

This collection of essays by an international team of scholars (Great Britain, Continental Europe, and Israel are all represented) explores various aspects of tolerance and intolerance within Judaism, between divergent groups of Christianity, between Jews and the "pagan" society, and mutually between Judaism and Christianity. The contents are as follows:

Introduction - Graham Stanton

1. Intolerance and martyrdom: from Socrates to Rabbi Aqiva - Ithamar Gruenwald
2. The other in 1 and 2 Maccabees - Daniel R. Schwartz
3. The pursuit of the millennium in early Judaism - Albert I. Baumgarten
4. Conservative revolution? The intolerant innovations of Qumran - Michael Mach
5. Who was considered an apostate in the Jewish Diaspora - J. M. G. Barclay
6. Why did Paul persecute the church - Justin Taylor, SM
7. Paul and the limits of tolerance - S. C. Barton
8. Philo's views on paganism - Maren R. Niehoff
9. Coexisting with the enemy: Jews and pagans in the Mishnah - Moshe Halbertal
10. Tertullian on idolatry and the limits of tolerance - Guy Stroumsa
11. The threefold Christian anti-Judaism - Francois Blanchetiere
12. The intertextual polemic of the Markan vineyard parable - Joel Marcus
13. Jews and Jewish Christians in the land of Israel at the time of the Bar Kochba war, with special reference to the *Apocalypse of Peter* - Richard Bauckham
14. The Nazoreans: living at the boundary of Judaism and Christianity - Martinus de Boer
15. Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho*: group boundaries, 'proselytes' and 'God-fearers' - Graham Stanton
16. Accusations of Jewish persecution in early Christian sources, with particular reference to Justin Martyr and the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* - Judith Lieu
17. Early Christians on synagogue prayer and imprecations - William Horbury
18. Messianism, Torah and early Christian tradition - Andrew Chester

19. Jewish and Christian public ethics in the early Roman Empire - Marcus Bockmuehl

Postscript: the future of intolerance - Guy Stroumsa

These essays afford penetrating views into the dynamics of group formation involving, on the one hand, the necessity of clear boundaries such that the group and its distinctive ethos will not erode and, on the other hand, the necessity of bridges that will allow for cross-fertilization, growth, and impact. The scholarship of the collection is quite sound. One may occasionally detect a preference for fostering pluralism at the expense of confessionalism, but these tendencies are readily understandable as reactions to an age in which religious and other forms of intolerance continue to result in widespread loss of life across the globe. We must indeed always beware of privileging our confessions above human lives, even though we will not all regard pluralism and the retreat from confessional witness as the best means to achieve a peaceful co-existence. The volume is exceptionally valuable as an introduction to the interaction of identity-formation, deviancy-control, and social engineering in the ancient world with profound applicability to the contemporary scene.

David A. deSilva

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Victor Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*. Peabody, Mass. Hendrickson, 1999 [reprint]. xvii + 563 pp.

Three scholars have largely shaped our understanding of the impact of Hellenization on Jews living in Palestine and throughout the Diaspora: Elias Bickerman, Victor Tcherikover, and Martin Hengel. This volume is a reprint of Tcherikover's classic contribution, originally published in 1959 by the Jewish Publication Society. It now includes a preface by noted scholar John J. Collins, who provides a sharp analysis of Tcherikover's work and importance.

The first two-thirds of the book (Part I) presents the state of affairs in Palestine prior to the Hellenization Crisis of 175-164 BC and forward through the Hasmonean dynasty. Tcherikover gives detailed attention to the political history of Palestine during this period, the Greek cities throughout Palestine prior to 175 BC, and the cultural, economic and political atmosphere of Jerusalem on the eve of the Reform. He then presents his own reconstruction of the tumultuous events from Jason's abolition of Torah as the law of the land through Antiochus' suppression of Judaism and the uprising of the Maccabees. In this reconstruction he differs from Bickerman and Hengel concerning the motivation of the persecution, attributing it to Antiochus' attempts to eliminate political enemies in his province rather than to the cultural and religious goals of the apostate Jewish leaders. The remainder of Part I turns to the progress of the Maccabean Revolt and the state set up by the Hasmonean House.

Part II looks at the history of Diaspora Judaism, mainly in Egypt (since the evidence for the Jewish community in Alexandria is the most voluminous) but also in Cyprus, Syria, and Asia Minor. He examines the relationship of Jewish communities to the Greek city in which they lived, as well as the economic, social, and cultural climate of this environment. The book concludes with several appendices (including a helpful guide to primary sources for the history of this period), lengthy notes, and

bibliography (quite complete for 1959, but, of course, now quite dated). For any student of the Intertestamental Period, this book remains a valuable resource, even though not all of Tcherikover's reconstruction is likely to be accepted. David A. deSilva

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James S. Spiegel, *Hypocrisy: Moral Fraud and Other Vices*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.

Hypocrisy is not a new vice, but seems to daily make news headlines in contemporary life. Perhaps this book is unique as it attempts to take a broad analysis of hypocrisy employing philosophical, psychological and theological perspectives. The author, a philosopher by formal training, attempts to summon the Christian church to pay more attention to hypocrisy. Spiegel writes: "Brothers and sisters, when it comes to this topic, we have been sleeping far too long." We would be reminded that Jesus focused a large segment of his ministry on exposing the pretense of religious leaders of his time.

The author leads the reader into a study of hypocrisy and its complexity. Roots of hypocrisy are self-deception and a lack of moral seriousness. Of course, it is difficult to examine the roots of hypocrisy because of its paradoxical nature "for the self deceived person seems to deny what he/she knows to be true."

Strengths of the book include chapters which provide definition of hypocrisy via literary, biblical examples along with case studies in present day. Hypocrisy is assessed from the perspective of different moral points of view which helps one understand many complex layers of this universally detested vice. The author addresses the apologetic problem for defenders of the Christian faith and this is a helpful section of the book.

Cliff Stewart

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David F. Wells, *Losing Our Virtue: Why the Church Must Recover Its Moral Vision*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. 228 pp, paper, \$16.00.

Four primary contributions have made Wells' *Losing Our Virtue* a volume I have highly recommended to friends.

- a.) Pungent and relevant analysis of the moral foundations eroding from under our post-modern western culture.
- b.) Adept control of a wide array of sources.
- c.) A hopeful, evangelical perspective.
- d.) A style which engages the reader.

Pungent and relevant analysis: Wells sets out to answer two questions: 1. "What does the Church need to understand about the culture...if it is to fulfill its missionary mandate?" (p. 20); 2. "Can the Church recover its moral character enough to make a difference in a society whose fabric is now much frayed?" (p. 18). He then examines the Church (contrasts classical religion with postmodern "designer religion"), society (targets escalation of license and law, with moral life the orphaned casualty), secular salvation (reviews modern appeal of style, consumption, fitness, and psychotherapy



which sometimes masquerade as virtual salvation). Poll-dictated values have evicted concrete virtues.

Wide array of sources: Wells' work represents the fruit of wide research, stemming both from classical works and contemporary. Despite many citations, he successfully avoids a mere rehash of others' ideas.

Hopeful, evangelical perspective: The reader emerges from the book with a distinct sense that, like Esther, the Church has been equipped precisely "for such a time as this." But to succeed it must recover "the substance of classical spirituality, [else] the evangelical Church will rapidly become an irrelevance in the modern world" (p. 206).

Engaging style: Wells mixes deeply-felt passion with eloquent integrity as he outlines the "shifting plates beneath our moral world" and warns that even the Church is increasingly "traveling blind, stripped of our moral compass."

*Losing Our Virtue* extends the thoughts set down by the author in *No Place for Truth and God in the Wasteland*, but is fully comprehensible to one who may not have read these prior volumes.

Paul Overland

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James R. Beck, *Jesus and Personality Theory*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999, 276 pp., \$15.99.

I have been an admirer of the five factor theory of personality of Drs. Paul Costa and Robert McCrae for some time, having found it to be comprehensive, well-researched, and even practical (which is no small accomplishment for a theory of personality). Therefore, I eagerly looked forward to reading Dr. Beck's book relating this theory to Christ and the church. As the author notes, five-factor models have "...shown robustness across cultures, ... across media,... across age groups,... (and offer) a model for unifying the field of personality attributes" (p. 31). In an area such as personality theory, which has few equals in the field of psychology in both interest and conceptual (and practical) confusion, such a statement is bold indeed.

Beck proposes two "major theses" in his book. First, Jesus is presented as "a counseling model for Christian counselors in that his teachings speak directly to the five major structural components of human personality." Secondly, "These teachings (Jesus' counseling) are indeed wonderful because they speak so perfectly to the composition of the human personality." To support these views, Beck first offers a brief review of the five factors of personality. This is followed by the presentation of ten "major teaching themes of Jesus as illustrations of his counseling to us... (themes which) speak powerfully to the five major factors..." (p. 15).

My reading was rewarded by the discovery of numerous "nuggets" of spiritual "gold." The author's desires to faithfully serve God and to assist others in their journeys toward Him are obvious throughout the book. Illustrations of such treasures included "...obedience to God's commands does not yield constraint; it gives freedom." (p. 57); "... we are to love enemies because God does and because doing so will change us" (p. 148); and "We are to esteem ourselves to the extent that God has esteemed us - no more, no less" (p. 202).

However, as I read, it was disconcerting to find myself nodding my head in agreement and appreciation one moment, and then shaking my head in disagreement the

next. It finally occurred to me that my vacillation was a result of the author's uneven presentation, theologically, clinically, and conceptually. Clinically and conceptually, Beck's description of the five factors is accurate for the most part. However, his description of either low or high scores (depending upon the scale) as "preferred" or otherwise desirable runs counter to Costa and McCrae's warnings (NEO PI-R Professional Manual). Examples of such descriptions include "... the preferred score on (agreeableness) would be on the agreeable end of the continuum" (p. 175) and a reference to a low scorer on "Order" as "the proverbial slob" (p. 85). In that the NEO PI-R is described by the authors as a measure of normal personality, neither high nor low scores are "better" or "worse," merely different.

As another example, Beck asked "two respected New Testament scholars to rate the personalities of Jesus and the Apostle Paul using the NEO PI-R test instrument" (p. 33), apparently to support his theses. These experts were unacquainted with the Five-Factor model, in an attempt to minimize bias in their responses. Results obtained are described throughout the book, under the discussion of the personality factors and their constituent facets. However, results obtained from raters unfamiliar with either personality assessment or Costa and McCrae's theory seems questionable at best and misleading at worst. To then employ such findings in support of one's theses accomplishes just the opposite.

Beck at times takes liberties with the Biblical text, as in his treatment of Jesus' healing of the man by the pool of Bethesda. While admitting that "...we cannot know with certainty" (p. 72) what went through the mind of this man, Beck goes on to add "Our purpose now is to explore what must have gone through (his mind)....we can reconstruct what he must have experienced" (p. 72). "For the sake of discussion," and to help make his case, he later "assumes" that this man became a follower of Jesus and that "his spiritual life blossomed..." (p. 79). While Beck's motive again appears to be that of bolstering his theses, such assumptions undermine his first thesis that Jesus teachings "speak directly to the five major structural components of human personality." Assumptions, unsupported assertions, and questionable assessments fail to provide such support.

In addition to the conceptual and the clinical, Beck's theological unevenness is baffling. While providing those "nuggets" already described, other less valuable offerings include "...the dying-to-self and the Christ-in-you themes were presented as the whole truth, while the New Testament presents them to us as some among many other principles that govern the living of the Christian life." (p. 209); "We need the reminder that only God is responsible for everything" (p. 84); and "As *our belief in hope* (continues)... one significant way we can help (clients) is to reacquaint them with the hope of their Christian faith and what it can do for them." (p. 78). Suggesting "Christ-in-you" as merely one theme among many others diminishes the centrality of the New Covenant and the reality of God's presence. God as "responsible for everything" undermines the doctrine of free will and the presence of an Enemy. "Belief in hope" is simply misplaced.

A "works" theology seems to pervade much of the book, with its emphasis upon the behavior of Christians. Beck sets the stage for this early on, writing "Christlikeness does not consist of personality similarity to Jesus but behavioral similarity to Jesus" (p. 36). Biblical teachings on the renewing of the mind (Rom 12:2), being transformed into

God's likeness (2 Cor 3:18), the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22, 23), and numerous others present a view which goes well beyond mere behavioral similarity. It is not that behavioral similarity is unimportant, it is rather the source and motives of such behavior, as well as "goal" to be attained, which are in question.

Some statements are simply inexplicable and a couple of examples may suffice. Beck writes, "The church has two major vehicles available to help it accomplish its goal of shaping the children of God into the image of Christ. The first and most familiar is *spiritual formation*... The second... is *psychotherapy*" (p. 223-224). While the prominence of psychotherapy within the last 50 years is indisputable, Beck elevates it to an undeserved position in the spiritual formation of Christians, if one were only to consider the preceding 19 centuries of church history. In a second example, Beck writes, "The story of Judas is the most tragic of all these (suicide) accounts. We can read the Gospel accounts... And still be bewildered by the man and his actions." (p. 76). However, as the Gospels of John and Luke clearly reveal, Satan's influence upon Judas must be considered in order to understand Judas' behavior. To describe his actions as "bewildering" is bewildering in itself.

Taken together, my eagerness regarding this book has been replaced by ambivalence. In parts of it, I was delighted and fed and I thank Dr. Beck. In other parts of the book I was annoyed and left shaking my head in disagreement. For now, I am content to leave the book and its impact upon me to time and the Spirit with the expectation that they will help determine which of these reactions will prevail.

Michael F. Reuschling

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James Montgomery Boice, *Christ's Call to Discipleship*, Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1998, 168 pp.

The author asserts that the problem the church faces today is "profession without practice." To the prestigious pastor of the historic Tenth Street Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, discipleship is not simply "a door to be entered but a path to be followed." The key to this path is the call of Jesus to become his disciples.

Jesus calls Christians to obedience, to follow him, to do what he did. He calls Christians to repentance, to be holy as he is holy. He calls Christians to submission, a commitment to be under authority to Jesus as Lord and he calls to perseverance, a lifetime of living for Jesus.

The development is solidly biblical and theological as are most of the 60 books Dr. Boice has either contributed to or written. This book unfolds the meaning, the path, the cost and the rewards of discipleship. It's only deficit is the lack of emphasis on the part community plays in discipleship. The balance of knowledge, heart response and commitment is maintained. Mission is integral as it includes listening, helping, giving and speaking God's truth to others.

Richard E. Allison



Robert Thornton Henderson, *A Door of Hope: Spiritual Conflict in Pastoral Ministry*, Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1997, 159 pp., \$12.99.

This little book should be required reading for those training in pastoral ministry! It is a straight-faced discussion of conflict in the church, particularly American churches so extensively compromised by secular culture. It dares to call the source of the conflict Satan without getting into the "exorcism mania" that mars so many books on spiritual conflict. The author does not sell quick-fix solutions. He offers tools that require persistent use: expository preaching, intercessory prayer, genuine worship, and intentional discipleship. He tells ministers that lasting results in a church usually take five to ten years of a minister's life.

It is also a book to encourage pastors who are in parish ministry. "A door of hope" is taken from Hosea 2:15, where God promises to open a path out of the Valley of Achor. The book uses "Achor" and "Hope" as codenames of churches at opposite poles from each other. "Achor" stands for the churches where the gospel is compromised and spiritual life is at low ebb. "Hope" stands for congregations alive to the consciousness of God's kingdom. The author's message to pastors is that God can lead their church from "Achor" toward "Hope." His is an optimism of conviction: Christ will build His church! But it is an optimism tempered by the knowledge that every church is a mixture of "Achor" and "Hope." Progress might be slow, and the best of churches is never beyond the devices of the "evil one."

Chapters two ("It's Not Neutral Out There") and five ("The Pattern Given on the Mount") get at the heart of the book's message. Henderson strongly agrees with Franz Overbeck that the church after Constantine lost the eschatological understanding of the church and let its theology be conformed to the culture of its surroundings. The early church was well aware that it was in mortal conflict with the Devil over the life of the church and the fate of the world. Our age tends to think people are basically good and thus the church will grow if the pastor simply works hard at Christian instruction. The reality, the author believes, is that good people still have sinful hearts which give Satan a point of entrance into church affairs. When one boldly preaches repentance and submission to the Lordship of Christ, latent evil breaks out into open conflict with the gospel and the agenda of Christ's kingdom. Pastors see their good work overturned and become discouraged, dispirited, and defeated. Some hold their job but lose the contagion of their faith. Others leave the congregation for more promising charges or quit the ministry altogether.

It was at such a moment in Pastor Henderson's early ministry that he experienced the voice of God. God challenged him to stay with a difficult pastorate and trust God for the power to shape the church in the image of the gospel. Thus, he emphasizes that clergy must minister "according to the pattern given on the mount," referring both to God's instructions to Moses on Sinai and to the spirit and content of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. No watered down gospel will have the needed grace to deliver "Achor." The word of God and the work of the Spirit alone have the power to transform a people into a "Hope" church.

This book is a theology of pastoral ministry, a life-vest thrown to pastors drowning in a sea of success-oriented how-to manuals, with their market-driven strategies and their thin veneer of christianese. He deals with basics of a gospel ministry

like kerygma, leitourgia, diakonia, marturia and koinonia - and suggests how they can become the fabric of a church's life and witness. At times one longs for more personal stories to flesh out the concepts, for the ones he shares always enhance his case. But he was determined not to write one of those "success stories" that frustrate the average pastor rather than encourage fellow ministers (p. 9). Good books leave you wanting more, so maybe this is one reason to applaud the book.

It is a pity that the book is so quickly out of print, but the publisher can help the reader to find a copy for purchase. Perhaps a clamor for more copies will get the book back in public circulation.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

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J.I. Packer and Carolyn Nystrom, *Never Beyond Hope: How God Touches and Uses Imperfect People*, Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 2000.

A subtitle to this book is that wonderful dictum that "God writes straight with crooked lines." Packer and Nystrom provide biblical case studies which illustrate God's touch on imperfect people who are used for God's purpose.

In some ways the treatment of the seven biblical personages are uneven. One might wonder about the out of sequence order of the chapters. And, on occasion, the reader might question the inclusion of narrative which seems beside the point of the book.

The book could be a wonderful text for an eight week church school class or home Bible Study. Nystrom's chief contribution to the book are the excellent study questions at the end of each chapter which provide ample material for study classes.

Cliff Stewart

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Robert J. Radcliffe. *Effective Ministry as an Associate Pastor*, Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1998, 204pp.

An associate pastor who did not seek to be a senior pastor! Here is a marvel in the church which qualifies the writer in a number of ways to write a book such as this. After periods of service as an associate pastor in several churches Robert Radcliffe has distilled his experience of this role and the wisdom gained from his experience into this helpful book. He covers every conceivable aspect of his subject with helpful comment and reflection and running through it all is the strong theme that the ministry of the associate pastor, where it exists, is a ministry unique to itself and vital to the church. It should not, he argues forcefully, be seen merely as a stepping stone to greater office, nor be devalued as against the senior pastor's ministry.

Chapters considering the biblical basis and history of the associate pastor and followed by sections dealing with the expectations of both associate pastor and church, relationships with staff, leaders and members and finally a section on personal aspects of such a ministry, including reasons to resign and move on gracefully. The book concludes with appendices which would be of great help to churches seeking an associate or pastors seeking an associate role.

The writing is very detailed, with thorough examination of the practical issues facing the associate pastor and the church. It is full of good advice and well illustrated with genuine examples from Robert Radcliffe's own varied experience. This gives the book a very down to earth feel. There is for example good material on sharing and communication (Chs. 6 and 10) and important lessons on conflict and confronting difficulties (Ch. 7). He shows, and advocates, a flexible approach to the associate's work and to the relationships within the church. The analysis of these matters together with the real life case studies is both a challenge and an inspiration.

There is much in the book that is not specific to the Associate Pastor, particularly the teaching concerning personal life and behaviour, but this is probably inevitable in a book on this theme. A more serious criticism would be the high level of expectation and demand that appears in the early chapters unseasoned with notes of grace and help for those who do not meet the standard. This is a snare of advice books such as this, though it is largely corrected by Radcliffe's examples of his own failure and the humility which he writes about his experience of conflict and difficulty.

The discussion questions at the end of each chapter might be useful in a pastor's conference, but they do not add a great deal to the work. The musical metaphor which is extended through the book and forms part of the subtitle becomes a little forced and would have been omitted without loss in this reader's view. However, this important subject has been well covered, ably illustrated and usefully written up here and if you want to explore it you need look no further. Chris Voke, Spurgeon's College, London

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Susan J. Zonnebelt-Smeenge and Robert C. De Vries, *Getting to the Other Side of Grief: Overcoming the Loss of a Spouse*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998. 222 pp., paper, \$12.99.

Psychologist Susan Zonnebelt-Smeenge and pastor/professor Robert De Vries both suffered the loss of a spouse. The book is written in tandem with insights from their own professional insight and personal experience. Each share valuable handles for the "journey of grief." Those who lose a spouse will find much that is helpful in this book, particularly those who face such loss at a young age. Helpful chapters include ways in which the young parent can be helpful to children. Each year eight hundred thousand individuals in our nation mourn the death of a husband or wife. This book is an instructional one for pastors who wish to be effective in the counseling of grieving spouses and families. The book would also be a substantive gift for the grieving spouse. The "journey" theme of the book gives room for the variety of grief experiences that one endures. The authors give permission for those grieving to face their grief head-on and, at the same time give a look at a future which will bring promise and fulfillment. One will find the complimentary views of psychologist and pastor quite practical.

Cliff Stewart

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Kathy Black, *Worship Across Cultures – A Handbook*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998, 245 pp.

This book achieves its simple stated aim; to search out basic knowledge of the way Christians from different cultures worship. It is not a book to read in the normal sense, but will be a valuable resource for any one who serves the church in a multi or cross-cultural context. This is increasingly the case for us all in a world which is shrinking and becoming culturally more complex.

Kathy Black began her study with a questionnaire sent to churches of twenty-one different cultures in the United States, ranging from African-American to Vietnamese-American. The information provided on worship practices from all these churches is collected in each of the twenty-one main chapters under headings such as: language, space, time, garb, prayer forms, creeds, music, preaching and blessing. The material on sacraments, weddings and funerals is also edited and written up. These last two items form the most details and length sections in each chapter and illustrate very clearly the profound influence of the particular culture on the practices of the church in these rights of passage. There are some brief but interesting appendices and a helpful glossary.

The book begins with a ten page introduction, which is all the comment that the author offers on her detailed analysis of worship across cultures. In it we learn that she is aware that her own cultural biases might influence the questionnaire. There is humility and wisdom in the fact that the questions are modified in the light of consultation and that the author revised her original thesis in the light of the collected data. The influence of the homeland missionary agency was discovered to be greater than the influence of the American denomination of the cultural church. This is a good insight and demonstrates that more comment, conclusion and implications drawn out of the material would have been valuable, perhaps in a final chapter. This is the main frustration of the book for any serious reader, even a final summary of the distinctives of each cultural church worship would have been enlightening.

However, seen as a dictionary of worship across cultures it is a most varied and complete work, and though repetitive as a read will serve well in a library as a resource and also as a reference book for those engaged in cross cultural ministry of any kind.

Chris Voke

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Robert Webber, *Planning Blended Worship – The Creative Mixture of Old and New*. Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1998, 209 pp.

There is, as Robert Webber says in the opening sentence of this very practical book, a “present worship revolution”. The author sets out to examine, analyse and then to guide this revolution into creative paths. He acknowledges the tensions and the potential, if not actual, division between the traditional and the renewed style of worship and seeks to answer this tension. While recognising the value of traditional or of renewed worship in its place, his basic thesis is that these can be “blended”, used together in a unique creative mixture that will claim the best of both.

The writing is thorough, practical and stimulating and contains many ideas and resources which will be of great use for those planning and leading worship, whatever

their chosen style. Each chapter ends with an exercise or series of questions which are valuable tools for a worship ministry team to consider. Though its underlying ethos is well versed scholarly knowledge of the history and theology of worship, the book is clearly aimed at practitioners rather than theorists.

Webber spends some time on the present situation and the history of worship, but the main part of the book is four chapters on the movement within a worship service: the gathering, hearing the word, the response and the dismissal. This general structure works well for the purpose of the book which is to expand and examine the style and progress of a particular worship service. However, he subsumes the Eucharist under the general idea of response to the word, which is theologically questionable and produces a certain tension in that chapter. While themes of thanksgiving, communion, celebration and resurrection are rightly present, some key elements of the communion service are notable by their absence. There is scarce mention, for example, of covenant, promise, gift, grace, sacrifice, self examination, penitence or proclamation. He seems to recognise a weakness here since he includes in this chapter an "alternative service of thanksgiving" as a second half. Having made this criticism, there is so much to commend, with the emphasise on joy, on Christ's presence and victory and with the practical ideas and resources offered to enable the new to blend with the traditional in the communion service. For example the powerful symbolism of the bread and the wine being carried in to the church at the beginning of the communion service is particularly stimulating.

If I have one further question it is over the dominance of the internal perspective rather than the external, the focus on church rather than world. Worship is undeniably first for God and for the people of God, but we should add into Webber's factors in the "common elements of worship revival" (page 19) worship as a mission event. Perhaps this perspective is more necessary in a less Christianised society than the United States and in particular where worship has become routine or tied to outworn cultural tradition. Worship would commonly be regarded in many parts of the world as a key to evangelism, as one English writer put it "the gospel answers questions raised by our worship."

For any church worship team who wish corporate worship to be renewed while holding the best of their tradition, to see that worship maintain true theological and spiritual flow and who, above all, wish to enable the people to come eager to worship, this book will provide resources and motivation for progress and change. It is a worthy edition to the growing library of books on this subject so essential to the life of the Christian community and to our knowledge of God.

Chris Voke

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N. T. Wright, *For All God's Worth*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998, 136 pp.

One day, I promise myself, I shall make a pilgrimage to Lichfield, the cathedral city in the midlands of England, for the pleasure of hearing Tom Wright preach the sort of sermons that make up this book. Subtitled 'True Worship and the Calling of the Church' this book of fourteen addresses is not a manual on how to structure the liturgy or improve the quality of what goes on in church. Only the first chapter deals with 'worship' in that sense, though it does so with a memorable passage in the style of 1

Corinthians 13, beginning, 'Though we sing with the tongues of men and of angels, if we are not truly worshipping the living God, we are noisy gongs and clanging cymbals', and ending, 'So now our tasks are worship, mission and management, these three; but the greatest of these is worship.' The rest of the first part of book sensibly promotes worship by concentrating on God, not on worship. The sermons in the second part of the book are more diverse in theme. There is a profound chapter on what it means for us to be 'the righteousness (=saving faithfulness) of God in Christ so as to bring healing to the situation in which we find ourselves. There is an excellent demonstration of justification by faith as the ecumenical doctrine par excellence, according to which intercommunion needs to be the start of the ecumenical journey, not the prize at its end. There is a fine treatment of Romans 9-11 and anti-Semitism, and of the Sermon on the Mount as 'doubly subversive', neither quietism nor politics, but attracting the fire of both. This is a book to read in installments, a chapter at a time, in the context of prayer and devotion.

R. Alastair Campbell

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Ronald J. Allen, *Patterns of Preaching: A Sermon Sampler*, St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1998.

Looking for a fresh style for the same old sermon? Ronald J. Allen, a professor of preaching and New Testament of Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, has compiled 34 patterns of preaching a sermon. Some of the patterns are new and others are old. The reader will soon discover that some of the 'models' are not one's style. Other's patterns for preaching will be intriguing and warrant further exploration.

Allen briefly describes the style or pattern and then a homiletician of renown submits an example of the type of sermon. This book is actually a companion to the author's textbook on preaching entitled: *Interpreting the Gospel: An Introduction to Preaching* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1998).

You will be disappointed in this book if you expect to master a new style using the information contained for each sermon type. This is only a sampler that is meant to whet one's appetite for more.

A criticism of the sermons contained is that they are all of a type that focuses on a sophisticated audience, rather than the typical Sunday morning congregation. Perhaps a choice of local church pastors to present 'model' sermons would have been better if the desire is to choose a style applicable to a more typical congregation.

Ronald Allen continues to write books on preaching which allow one to discover a style of preaching that is not characterized by a 'cookie cutter' sameness. He recognizes a new energy in the field of preaching. My recommendation is to read his books as a way to stimulate creative approaches to sermons that fit your congregation and your interest.

Cliff Stewart



John Driver, *Images Of The Church In Mission*, Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1997, 240 pp.

It is common today for churches to search for new ways of viewing themselves in the light of the severe mission challenge we face. In this book John Driver has given us stimulating new materials to help in that search. His aim is to present the very nature of the church as mission and he does so as he calls on a series of biblical images, clustered under the headings; Images of Pilgrimage, New Order, Peoplehood and Transformation. Each image is examined in one short chapter, first in its Old Testament, then its New Testament version and finally Driver concludes with some theological comment and practical challenge. It is a simple and helpful structure.

The chapters on the images of the church are detailed and primarily descriptive, without significant conclusions being drawn. The introduction and conclusion, however, are forcefully written and contain the meat of Driver's argument. He wishes to show not only that the calling of the church is mission, but that we have yet fully to recover from the fourth century "Constantinian shift". He presents the church as in urgent need of rediscovering herself as a counter-culture. This is the motive for his search for biblical images. We are not to draw our self-understanding from the models of our age, he argues, and certainly not from the age of Christendom with its imperial model, but rather from the radical and authentic images presented in scripture. The book works as a whole and is a valuable resource for students and Bible teachers.

His broad brushstrokes over the whole of Christian history, essential to the argument and substantially sustainable, leave a sense of unease, simply because history is not so straightforward as sometimes presented. Similarly, the focus on the church as a counter-culture leads to omission of some elements of the picture. For example, the wisdom tradition of the Old Testament, which presents a corrective to too exclusive a view of God's community, is studiously ignored (p. 27). There are sections which are very dependent on word study and these, though helpful in some respects, can narrow the focus of interpretation by omitting other words and themes that might give a rounder picture of the biblical teaching. For example, it could be questioned how far the skene group of words can be read consistently as meaning "temporary dwelling", particularly in the light of Revelation 21:3 which refers to God's final dwelling with human kind. (p. 63ff.) These criticisms are not substantial, however, and the over-arching themes, with their biblical foundations, remain firm and illuminating. So also does the challenge of Driver's conclusions. This book is crisply written, full of interest and needs to be taken seriously by the church, still largely dominated by, or prone to follow, secular and imperialistic images rather than biblical ones which lead out to true mission.

Chris Voke

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William J. Larkin Jr. and Joel F. Edwards, eds. *Mission in the New Testament-An Evangelical Approach*. New York: Orbis Books, 1998.

Here is a book strictly devoted to the subject of mission, but it is not a book by missiologists. Its authors are New Testament scholars. The book is an example of a helpful approach represented by an increasing number of serious works. It combines

biblical and practical disciplines and in doing so it opens new insights for the evangelist, the pastor and the scholar.

*Mission in the New Testament* attempts to be thorough as well as faithful to the New Testament as it moves through a number of sections, each covering a separate group of writings. Each chapter, written by a separate author, is linked into a conservative view of the historical and literary background, but this does not dominate or distract from the valuable work done on the main theological themes. The editors have asked for two brief glances backwards, to the Old Testament and to intertestamental Judaism, and then further historical and background material on the life of Jesus and the early church. The other sections deal concisely with Paul's writings, the synoptic gospels and Acts and finally the general epistles and Johannine corpus. All this takes some time to do and the plan, though adventurous, is a worthy one. The chapters are of necessity relatively short (the longest is 28 pages) and the subject matter and discussion fairly confined. However the compression of subject matter has the effect, for most of the writers, of focusing the content on a few central and significant themes and this is generally helpful both to the unity of the book and to its simplicity of structure.

The final section of each chapter gives and opportunity for some present applications to be drawn out and these are on the whole clear and relevant, though on occasions the conclusions merely summarizes the main themes of the chapter and the author does not take the opportunity of bringing the message into the present.

A number of chapters are of note. There is valuable and interesting work done by Joel F. Williams on Mission in Mark and a needed balance between word and life brought by the contribution of Andreas J. Kostenberger on the General Epistles. Don N. Howell Jr. demonstrates the depth of theology which serves as a foundation to mission in the writings and life of the apostle Paul. He also writes with insight and effectiveness about the dynamics of Paul's mission, which he draws out as confidence in the Spirit, collaborative ministry and intercessory prayer, all challenging emphases shown from the text. At the same time he presents and maintains the power of the gospel itself to be the defining factor in all mission.

This book is the product of a group of American scholars, but it is open in its stance to the UK and wider European scene and contains a recognition of worldwide scholarship in the area of mission with many key references to such works. As well as being a valuable book for its own ideas in this important subject it would be useful as a resource and reference book (though the absence of an index makes it a little less so.)

Here then is a valuable book for any library or practitioner's bookshelf. You will have to decide if it belongs properly under New Testament or Missiology. Perhaps this is the underlying issue the book seeks to raise. It does so very successfully.

Chris Voke

Mark Mittelberg (with contributions by Bill Hybels), *Building a Contagious Church: Revolutionizing the Way We View and Do Evangelism*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000. 404 pp., hb, \$19.99.

While personal evangelism is important, individual faith-sharing will be enhanced if done in the framework of a church that has evangelism as its top priority. *Building a Contagious Church* gets to the heart of the matter in a very readable format with practical ideas.

Mark Mittelberg is executive vice president for evangelism for Willow Creek Association. Previously, as director of evangelism at Willow Creek Community Church, South Barrington, Illinois, he joined Bill Hybels and Lee Strobel in developing the *Becoming a Contagious Christian* materials for personal evangelism. Mittelberg builds on those materials to help churches develop a corporate outreach ministry.

In the first part, "A Contagious Plan," Mittelberg makes the case for an evangelistic partnership between a congregation and its members. He develops his concept for this relationship both verbally and through the progressive development of a diagram.

Part 2, "A Contagious Change Process," is the heart of the book. Here Mittelberg presents a process to move a congregation from being passive or resistant toward evangelism to having outreach as a core value. He cautions against creating a series of unrelated evangelistic programs and events without first developing a foundational basis for outreach. His six-stage process will lead a congregation to develop an integrated congregational strategy to empower and equip believers to share their faith according to their own personal styles.

In the third part, "Contagious Diversity," he includes one chapter with practical programmatic, field-tested ideas for each of the six personal evangelistic styles developed in *Becoming a Contagious Christian*. These ideas, drawn from Willow Creek and congregations in its association, provide churches with a variety of outreach ministries that will appeal to persons with diverse evangelistic styles.

The final part, "Contagious Ministry," addresses two issues. First, Mittelberg says we must declare the good news of Jesus Christ courageously, accurately (from a biblical perspective), and comprehensively. This chapter should dispel the myth that seeker churches such as Willow Creek have watered down the gospel. The final chapter is a call to understand the principles presented in the book and apply them to our congregations.

Mittelberg includes several selections from motivational messages by Bill Hybels. Pastors may use these excerpts as models for preaching on this subject. Also, each chapter ends with thought-provoking questions for personal reflection or small group discussion.

Though the book lacks an index and a bibliography, it does include a complete list of contact information for churches cited in the book—an excellent resource for seeking more detailed information about the outreach ideas presented.

I highly recommend this book for pastors who want to lead their congregations toward a more comprehensive outreach strategy.

Ronald W. Waters



## Book Reviews

Barbara Brown Zikmund, Adair T. Lummis, and Patricia Mei Yin Chang, *Clergy Women: An Uphill Calling*, Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press, 1998, 199 pp., \$20.95.

This book is the result of a 1993 study which was sponsored by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. as a follow-up to an earlier study which was published in 1983 as the book, *Women of the Cloth: A New Opportunity for the Churches*. For the current study, 9,894 male and female clergy in sixteen denominations were sent questionnaires by the research team. The conclusions are based on information from the 2,170 men and 2,668 women who responded, 248 short telephone interviews, and 30 longer interviews.

The book is divided into six chapters. In the first, the researchers describe the "diverse landscape" (p. 16) into which women clergy are ordained in terms of three types of denominations, each based on how leadership authority is recognized: congregation-centered, institution-centered, and Spirit-centered.

The second chapter examines the issues that must be balanced in clergy lives: healthy boundaries, spouses (clergy and non-clergy), children, economic and geographic pressures, age and health. The unique issues faced by single clergy, divorced clergy, and lesbian/gay clergy are also considered. In the authors' opinion, "the healthiest women -- spiritually, physically, and socially -- are in the Spirit-centered denominations." (p. 48) They suggest that this may be due to the fact that these women clergy tend to be older than their counterparts in congregation- and institution-centered denominations.

While the word "spiritually" is used in this context, spirituality is a subject that seems to be neglected in this study, except for a short section on "spiritual feminism," which is based solely on the preference for inclusive language. The centrality of a clergyperson's personal spiritual life to her/his life and vocation is not addressed at any point in the book.

This omission is not unique to this study. The "United Methodist Clergywomen Retention Study" produced by the Anna Howard Shaw Center at the Boston University School of Theology in 1997 also neglects pastors' personal spirituality. It recommends that clergy seek guidance from professional counselors, but never mentions spiritual directors/friends. "Spiritual growth and renewal" is mentioned once in that study -- as the last item in the list of what might be considered "self-care." Nothing is included on the importance of spiritual formation.

Chapter Three of *Clergy Women* addresses the role of clergy as religious leaders. The study notes that, while current clergy tend to have styles of leadership that are basically democratic, most alternate between directive and democratic models. In addition, the authors state that clergy assess their competence as leaders based on congregational membership, congregational attitude toward the future, and congregational financial security. My conclusion, as I read these results, is that experience and training in the complex realities of transformational leadership -- which is always based in the spiritual life of the leader -- is clearly needed.

The fourth chapter focuses on ordained ministry as a job, and the roles played by economics, isolation, hiring systems, career paths and children. According to this study, discrimination exists in salary and in hiring/appointments. Across the denominations, women clergy are paid 9% less than their male colleagues for the same work. Men are

more likely to be solo pastors after ordination; women tend to be assistant or associate pastors.

The next chapter focuses on the "call" and denominational ordination processes. Interestingly, the study concludes that the majority of those surveyed in congregation- and institution-centered denominations "are not quite sure that God has explicitly called them to ordained ministry in order to carry out a God-given mission in the church and the world." (p. 96) However, they do believe that ordination will help them to carry out the ministry to which they will be called.

The final chapter focuses on the expanding field of non-parish ministry. The researchers observe that, as clergy increasingly move into these positions, the historical understandings of ordination are being questioned. They also examine why clergy leave the ministry. A list of reasons is given: "Basic incompetence, substance abuse, sexual misconduct, borderline psychosis, loss of faith, desire for more money or power and distaste for ministering to and with persons who differ from themselves." (p. 119) Again, this is a list of "presenting issues," symptoms of spiritual crises. The spiritual underpinnings of pastors' lives are not included in this exploration. The authors do note that the "spiritual or divine dimension to their profession is extremely important" to clergy women (p. 130), but do not elaborate on this subject.

Like its predecessor, this book is a useful portrait of many of the issues faced by women in ministry. And, like its predecessor, it fails to explore the role of spiritual formation in sustained, long-term ministry.

Anne M. Dilenschneider, D.Min., Ashland Theological Seminary

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John Wilkinson, *The Bible and Healing: a Medical and Theological Commentary*, Edinburgh, Scotland: the Handsel Press Ltd, 1998, 350 pp., £14.95.

"Words are the physicians of the mind diseased." wrote Aeschylus in *Prometheus Bound*. Dr. Wilkinson would have us to know *the* Word as the Great Physician of not only the mind but also the body and soul. And yet, he notes that the place of health, or more accurately, illness within the Christian walk, and the reconciliation of spirituality and disease, is fraught with questions and quagmires for many Christians. "... 'healing' (he writes) is a word which is virtually disowned by both medicine and theology." (p. 1) and this rejection, too frequently, impacts flesh-and-blood brothers and sisters, not merely vocabulary and concepts. This important study of the Bible and healing seeks to redress this deficiency and it is the single best treatment of disease and healing I have discovered in my twenty years of providing mental healthcare.

Beginning with a Biblical understanding of health which incorporates the mind, soul, and body, Wilkinson traces health and healing throughout the Old and New Testaments and then through the history of the church, up to the present. His commentary is divided into five parts examining, in order, the Biblical understanding of health, disease and healing in the Old Testament, healing in the Gospels, healing in the apostolic church and healing in the modern church. Throughout, Wilkinson is thorough, thoughtful, articulate, and faithful to Scripture. His compassion is evident and his scholarship is first-class. His discussions of "health" from Old and New Testament

perspectives, as well as his examination of Paul's thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. 12:7-10) and healing in the epistle of James (James 5:13-18), are especially detailed and enlightening.

To counter simplistic explanations of biological reductionism in accounting for disease, Dr. Wilkinson reminds us that both health and disease encompass much more than molecules and metabolic processes gone awry. Similarly, the ages-old answer of sin or spiritual feebleness also fails to faithfully mirror Biblical truth. Instead, "In this book... healing is the enabling of a man to function as a whole in accordance with God's will for him. ...(it) includes both the practice of orthodox medicine and the making of people whole in a theological sense." (p. 2)

Dr. Wilkinson's training and experiences as a medical doctor and theologian show clearly throughout this "medical and theological commentary." An example is his consideration of "systemic" diseases of the Old Testament (e.g., cardiovascular and gastrointestinal disorders) for both their medical and theological significance. Like any good physician, he personalizes what could be merely an academic or clinical exercise by focusing upon three "case studies;" the epileptic boy of Matt. 17:14-21, the "bent woman" of Luke 13:10-17, and the man born blind of John 9:1-38. Striving for comprehensiveness and balance in his writing, he provides the leading medical and theological perspectives for these and other "cases," settling upon that point of view which he deems most defensible. His writing is sprinkled with a liberal selection of valuable quotes, such as Karl Barth's description of Exodus 15:26 as "the divine Magna Carta in all matters of health and all related questions."

If there are any criticisms of Dr. Wilkinson's work, they are minor and insignificant in light of his excellent contribution. I highly recommend this book to anyone with an interest in what Scripture, the church, and theology have to say about this vital area. Perhaps this work by Dr. Wilkinson will aid the church in reclaiming that which was and, many would argue, remains its birthright, addressing key questions and solidifying its theological terra firma.

Michael F. Reuschling



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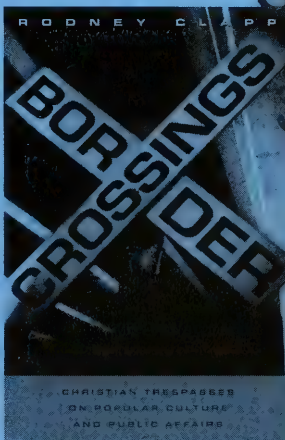
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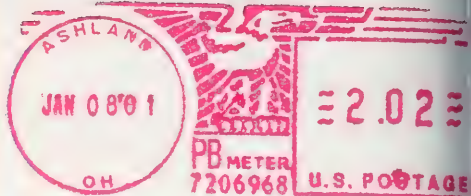
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## Editor's Introduction

Humans are a visual creatures. Our eyes are among the main portals for information and stimuli, as both teachers and television producers know. The Bible shows an awareness of the importance of the eye, with the prophets using visual metaphors such as plumb-lines and holes in house walls, and Jesus using visual images such as white fields and shepherdless sheep. We at Ashland Theological Seminary have been visually impacted over the past year, in one case with images of international import, and in another by those which, while more local, will also have international import.

The world was stunned by the stark images of planes deliberately crashing on September 11<sup>th</sup>. These events left a permanent change on the visible landscape of New York, a scar on our memory of the city. There has also been a significant landscape change at Ashland Theological Seminary, but in this case it is for the good. This fall saw the opening of a beautiful and functional new building which houses both the Sandberg Leadership Center and the Smetzer Counseling Center. The latter will be a place of education but also of healing as students partake in the healing of people from the community who can come to the Center for care. As they enter they will be visually impacted by a statue of Jesus which was crafted by an ATS graduate, Louise Waller. Jesus is seated holding in one hand a newborn baby, with the other hand and arm reaching out, providing a support for any who would care to literally sit in his lap. In this seat, the visitor will see Jesus looking at them with an expression of love as he enfolds them in his lap. This is what the Center hopes to provide, the loving compassion of Christ to those who are wounded and in pain. This mission is spelled out here by the Director of the Midwest Counseling Center.

The Leadership Center has both a local and a global vision to model and teach leadership with integrity to those involved in all spheres of influence. Its Director presents a sample of the activities sponsored by the Center. Much more is planned, and information on both of these centers can be obtained by contacting ATS. While not directly deriving from the Leadership Center, we also include a look at one style of leadership which will face all involved in ministry.

This year has also seen the phenomenal sales of several Christian books. The name of Jabez has become better known than ever before. We present a different perspective on that faithful biblical character. Four other characters are also presented, representing different aspects of ministry, at least one of which will no doubt strike a chord with each of our readers. This chapel talk needs to be heard by all of us as we seek to serve our Lord.

Last but not least, we have books, books, and more books. There are lengthier articles on such things as the current theological controversy of the openness of God- what does he know and when does he know it, as well as recent literature on the prophets and on spiritual formation. With our regular book review section and a new section of shorter book notes, we hope that there are books which will interest everyone.

*Baruch hashem hamevorach.*

David W. Baker



**"Four Friends"**

Paul Overland\*

Recently I met four friends. They proved remarkably wise. Suggestions they offered were borne out of their experiences in ministry, in the hope that my ministry might be richer. Their advice deeply moved me. Perhaps it will you, as well.

Before proceeding, I must admit that these insights are not my own. They come from someone else's sermon. By now it must be "public domain", since it was first preached in approximately 627 B.C. That places us at the opening days of Jeremiah's ministry, just a bit ahead of the closing days of the Southern kingdom of Israel. Jeremiah will personally witness the demise of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. Listen, then, with both mind and imagination to what may have been Jeremiah's inaugural sermon (Jer. 2.1-9).

*1 The word of the Lord came to me: 2 "Go proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem: 'I remember the devotion of your youth,*

At once as these words open to us it is as if someone were leafing thoughtfully through a cherished album. God is the one opening the album - a very personal album. In fact, albums don't come with more deeply-cherished memories than these. Picture scenes from the next leaf.

*I remember...how as a bride you loved me and followed me through the desert, through a land not sown.*

*3 Israel was holy to the Lord, The first fruits of his harvest; All who devoured her were held guilty, And disaster overtook them," declares the Lord.*

At this point God shuts the album. He has something very, very sobering to say to his people.

*4 Hear the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, all you clans of the house of Israel.*

*5 This is what the Lord says: "What fault did your fathers find in me, that they strayed so far from me?"*

Was there a divine pause after this question? Did God wait for a reply? Perhaps so. The people answered nothing. So he went on.

---

\* Paul Overland (Ph.D., Brandeis) is Assistant Professor of Old Testament at ATS. This is a slightly edited transcript of an ATS chapel sermon delivered 10/26/01.

"Four Friends"

*They followed worthless idols, And became worthless themselves.*

Do not these few words convey an enormous truth? What I follow, that I become, for good or ill.

*6 They did not ask, 'Where is the Lord, who brought us up out of Egypt and led us through the barren wilderness, through a land of deserts and rifts, a land of drought and darkness, a land where no one travels and no one lives?'*

*7 I brought you into a fertile land to eat its fruit and rich produce. But you came and defiled my land And made my inheritance detestable.*

Now we meet our four friends.

*8 (First) The priests did not ask, 'Where is the Lord?'*

*(Second) Those who deal with the law did not know me;*

*(Third) The leaders rebelled against me.*

*(Finally) The prophets prophesied by Baal, Following worthless idols.*

*9 Therefore I bring charges against you again," declares the Lord. "And I will bring charges against your children's children.*

The passage continues to unfold, reading very much like a court case. God probes: "By walking away from our relationship your fathers lodged an implicit complaint against me. Tell me: Was it I who let them down? Did I offend them? Was I an abusive husband? What went wrong?"

A hollow silence echoes in response. Then God proceeds to present His case. "The actual fault," he explains, "is not with me, but with you." That fault confronts us like a banner emblazoned across the courtroom wall: "*They did not ask, 'Where is the Lord...who led us through the barren wilderness, through...a land where no one travels? (v. 6)'*" After arriving in Canaan, Israel should easily have realized that they owed their transit through the severe Sinai Peninsula to nothing less than God's miraculous leadership and provision.

God led them with a towering cloud by day and a column of fire by night. One Jewish commentator suggests that the pillar fundamentally consisted of fire symbolizing God's presence. During the night the fire blazed through a cloud which encased it, a bright contrast against the night sky. During the day, however, sunlight made the fire less obvious and caused the

encasing cloud to become more evident. Whether day or night, the fiery pillar reminded them of God's immediate presence. His presence is illuminating. His presence is powerful.

As the Presence moved, the people packed up and moved. But when the Presence stayed, the people stayed. So there was keen connection linking the people with the presence of God as he led them *through the barren wilderness, through...a land where no one travels*.

Some 900 years later in Jeremiah's day, it was a callous insensitivity to this Presence which comprised Israel's fundamental flaw. No one missed God's presence. No one thought to inquire, "Where is the Lord?" And we could, I suppose, stop the lesson there. But Jeremiah keeps preaching.

Beyond this fundamental flaw of failing to inquire after the presence of God, the four friends expose four particular fissures, cracks in the foundation of Israel's spiritual life which led to her eventual downfall. One of them speaks especially to me, for I am very like him. Perhaps one of the four will speak to you.

The first friend to introduce himself to us is a priest. What uniquely characterized the ministry of a priest in the Old Testament? Fundamentally, the priest was charged by God through ceremony to bring men and women into the presence of God. We associate their ministry with ceremony, since they executed prescribed liturgies. They were the ones who knew which sacrifices must be offered for what offenses. They knew when and how much should be burned on the bronze altar, what may be eaten, and that by whom. Festivals were their domain as well--prescribed events recurring with caledrical circularity. So you may think of the priests as men charged by God through ceremony to bring men and women into his presence. For, you see, of anyone they served closest to that place which of all places in the entire cosmos was thought to be *where God resided*-- the Holy of Holies. In addition, one of these priests dared annually to actually enter that space. In the fall of the year, at Yom Kippur, he cautiously crossed the threshold to effect atonement.

Priests were, then, men charged by God through ceremony to bring others into God's very presence. They were charged to clear out roadblocks of sin so that commoners may draw close to God. And so my friend "Kohen", the priest would say to me, "If ever such a ministry is entrusted to me-- if at any point in my ministry, God may entrust me with the privilege of escorting people into his presence, whether it is leading a worship liturgy, a conducting a baptism, or officiating a wedding, then take my advice: do not venture into the service without sincerely inquiring, 'Where is the Lord?'"

What shall I do if in response to that question, I sense that the Lord is not present? Move. Search out where the column of fire has gone, and move after it.



## "Four Friends"

The second friend belongs to those who deal with the law: "Law-handlers". Some versions translate "judge". But in reality, the Hebrew at this point does not use *shopet*, judge, but rather "those who handle the law." "Handle" (*tapas*) is an interesting word. It was used in battle to describe a victor's control over vanquished peoples. POW's are "handled," captured. Sometimes *tapas* is simply translated "capture". But here it characterizes how the professionals were treating biblical law.

A puppy is the newest member of our family. When go out we attach a leash to her collar-- you might say we are "puppy handlers." We are clearly in control. Or at least that is the illusion she allows us to entertain!

Transfer the leash-and-collar image to "law handlers", and I suspect we will have grasped Jeremiah's point. God's law, his Torah, had become their puppy. They could lead, manipulate it as they wished. They represented the professionals, the law was their subject.

Of the four friends, this "law handler" speaks most clearly to me. I, too, am a law handler by profession. I even have alphabet soup after my name to prove it. So Friend #2 asks me, "Overland, you know so much about the Bible. It reminds me of my back in the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Don't you make it too. I knew so much about the Torah, but there was a piece of knowledge even more vital, which I overlooked. I did not know God! (v. 8b)."

As I read Jeremiah's words it's rather like a sonic boom echoing within. I'm paid to *know*. However, as I prepare for lecture, the first item which routinely must appear on my checklist is this: to know *God*. Then knowledge about literary structure, authorship, historical background, word studies will take their place. But first know God. So the law handler speaks to me.

The third friend introduces himself as a "leader" (v. 8c). The word back of "leader" is shepherd. Many versions appropriately render it "leader" since it is clear we are not talking about care of animals of the four-legged variety, but the two-legged variety. What distinguishes the leader from the priest and law handler? By the way: all four of these roles are *good roles*. They are God-ordained roles, to be regarded with honor. However, they are susceptible to spiritual diseases, maladies which our friends would inoculate us against.

Back to the shepherd: what distinguishes this role? The shepherd stands out as one charged with caring for other people. More than scrutiny of scripture, more than guiding people into God's presence, the shepherd cares for the daily needs and concerns of a cluster of people. Through a modern lens we may picture administrators, committee chairs, and counselors caring for people and their problems.

So I turn to the 7th century leader and ask, "What can go wrong in the ministry of a shepherd?" His response cuts to the heart of leadership. "I lost

sight of the fact that my power over people was an entrustment. I was all the while accountable to an over-shepherd for how I used my power. But instead of standing accountable, I *rebelled* (v. 8c). With the best of intentions I pursued my godly agenda. As my agenda substituted for God's, I continued to pursue it, even though it set me at cross-purposes against God. Don't make that mistake!"

Another fisherman-turned-shepherd put leadership in perspective some 600 years later. He wrote, *Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers -- not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples of the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away* (1 Pet. 5.2-4). So the third friend urges me always to bear in mind that I care for these people *for him*. It is *his agenda*, not mine, I must pursue.

The fourth friend calls himself a prophet. What exactly was a prophet? Among many definitions, each with their merit, it helps me to picture the prophet as a man (and sometimes a woman) who claimed divine authorization as he agitated God's people. They sought to awaken God's people from moral and spiritual slumber, a slumber which if left unattended would lead to destruction. One Jewish writer, Abraham Heschel, observes that had Israel not slumbered, there would have been no need for the prophets. They would have been splendidly unemployed. But, alas, Israel often drifted, so our Bible is rich with their arresting agitations.

If I find myself from time to time entrusted with a message of warning, sent to awaken God's people, I may be able to learn a bit of wisdom from this fourth friend. He warns me, "Beware of becoming so enamored with your message that you failed to check the source. The cause may seem right, but unless you are careful, you will start preaching sermons inspired from a faulted source: too late we discovered that we *prophesied by Baal* and were *following worthless idols* (v. 8d)."

We need agitators today. I need friends who will confront me: "Overland, you're asleep on this issue or that. You're pretending everything all is well, but it's not!" However, it's possible for me to become agitated for an important cause (spiritual, social), yet failing to ensure that my script comes from God. Failing that checkpoint, I'm just a cannon firing in all directions, damaging the flock. Sometimes the error will be a surplus of truth with a deficit of love. Or the error will be caving in to the wishes of the people, assuring "Peace, peace" when there will be no peace.

As we met these four friends, did you find yourself identifying with any one of them? Be grateful for the role entrusted to you. Each is honorable. Then take a page from our friends' notebook. Am I a priest? Then in all my

## "Four Friends"

ceremonial routines, routinely I must ask, "Where is the Lord?" So simple a question! So profound a probe! Is the Lord not near? Then move.

Am I a law handler, knowing much about the content of this inspired book? Above all I must purpose to know its author, else I know nothing.

Am I a leader? Then I must seek the chief-shepherd's favor, always aware that it is for him that I care for them.

Am I a prophet? May I always check the source of my sermons, stirring others to action with messages that spring from divine authorization, not of my private musing.

The four friends offer profound counsel. Aided by their discoveries may we fulfill our ministry with even greater effectiveness.



JABEZ: A MAN NAMED PAIN: AN INTEGRATIVE  
HERMENEUTICAL EXERCISE

by Elaine Heath\*

Hermeneutics, the Bible and Barth

A kind of holy unrest is brewing in biblical scholarship today. Camps are mingling, walls are coming down, the old labels aren't working so well anymore.<sup>1</sup> The causes are many: ecumenism, spiritual hunger, a renewed respect for the genuine wisdom of the ancients, a growing humility toward the limitations of the scientific method. Whatever the cause, it is no longer enough to speak only of the historical setting of the text, the original audience, authorship, or date. Nor is it enough to read the Bible with a fideistic literalism, or as an esoteric analogue in which nothing means what it says because everything means something else. It is not enough to analyze the Bible as if it were merely another book, for to do so is to ignore the claims the Bible makes of itself.<sup>2</sup> What then is a responsible hermeneutic of scripture?

The current struggle in biblical hermeneutics reflects the struggle in Christian theology. The struggle is, to borrow William Thompson's words, to put back into biblical studies and Christian theology the "soul" which has been demythologized nigh unto death.<sup>3</sup> That soul is the very Spirit of Christ.

The struggle is not new. It emerged in this century most vigorously in the work of Karl Barth, whose response to Protestant liberalism and fundamentalism was neoorthodoxy—a return to the best of the old while reaching out for the best of the new.<sup>4</sup> For Barth, the centrality of Christ is the foundation for biblical hermeneutics. In many ways he is a man for our time, as we struggle to hear what the Bible says.

The Bible audaciously claims to be the written word of God for the people of God. Both Old and New Testaments are the written means through which the Holy Spirit reveals Jesus Christ to the church.<sup>5</sup> This is the central conviction of Barth. While Barth welcomes the tools of historical-critical scholarship, literary criticism and typological reading, and so on, his overall concern is that readers submit themselves to the claims made by the Word of God encountered in the text.<sup>6</sup> All tools of scholarship are to serve the reader in that task.

The essay that follows is an exercise in (primarily) Barthian hermeneutics. It combines scholarly exegesis and hermeneutics in a way that exalts Jesus Christ and submits the author to the claims of Jesus Christ made

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through the text. I have deliberately avoided pedantic labels for each hermeneutical movement to notify the reader that “we will now incorporate Ricoeur’s second naïveté” or “here is an example of Tracy’s conversation model” and so on. Instead I have endeavored to combine naturally and conversationally the fruits of historical-critical research with those of literary criticism and hermeneutics, drawing from the insights of psychology, spirituality and the wisdom of the saints. Footnotes are plentiful enough for the reader who wishes to catalogue and list such things. In this particular essay to have made such notations within the text would have seemed akin to a composer interrupting the performance of her overture every few measures to explain to the audience precisely how she was influenced by this musician or that poet in each section of music. My goal is to integrate and orchestrate a diverse array of voices concerning the text, in order to better hear what the Holy Spirit is saying through the text, so that my reader may also hear. This is a Barthian approach.<sup>7</sup>

Part Two of the essay is developed in four progressions which are named after the four steps of *lectio divina*.<sup>8</sup> This has been done to emphasize the foundational role of “listening” prayer in a responsible interpretation of the Bible.<sup>9</sup> First we encounter the text itself, nakedly, unhurriedly. The text should be read several times before consulting secondary sources so that it can speak for itself before others speak about it. This step is *lectio*.

Then we begin to listen in earnest not only to the text but also to the voices of others who converse with the text. For the Holy Spirit speaks to us in concert. Questions arise for the reader in the process of listening and speaking, which lead to an awareness of particular words, images, or themes from the text that seem to stand out.<sup>10</sup> This second step is *oratio*.

*Meditatio* comes next. In it there is a “descent from the mind into the heart,” as our Eastern Orthodox friends would say, of the particular word, phrase or theme that has been heard. There the conversation grows more intimate, more fecund, more *theological*, perhaps less verbal. All that has been heard in the text and in the conversation must percolate in the heart, fueled with Spirit fire. When this truly happens, the text begets a Word that is “living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”<sup>11</sup> The word of life that has been spoken must now be internalized and lived out. This is *contemplatio*, the overflowing fullness of prayer. As Barth would say, in this part we submit ourselves and our lives to the Word’s decision about us.<sup>12</sup> Unless Bible study leads to obedience to the Word, it is fruitless. *Contemplatio* is the final obedience, the glad surrender of oneself to the transforming Word. It is worship.

Like Barth, my conviction is that the Holy Spirit speaks in concert

through all these voices—the biblical text, scholars, saints,<sup>13</sup> reasoned reflection and our own life experiences—if we will only listen. The Bible, when taken in isolation from the other voices, becomes dry and lifeless, or worse, an instrument for unbridled eisegesis. The other voices without the Bible are like a compass without the needle. If, on the other hand we approach the text on our knees, listening with all our might to the Holy Spirit speaking in community, the compass leads us home. The text that I have chosen seems particularly apt for this endeavor, for it seems as dead and dry as ever a text could be, at first reading. It is an old, forgotten passage, buried in a lengthy genealogy, left out of the lectionaries and unmentioned in the hymns. I stumbled across it several years ago while methodically reading through 1 Chronicles, a practice I learned from Betty, the pastor who taught me to “pray the scriptures.” She was childlike enough to believe that every word of the Bible trembles with incipient life for those who have ears to hear. This brief text has become a “living word” for me, which continues to form my spirituality and to fuel my passion for God. I hear it speak fresh wisdom with each new reading. Barth would be pleased. So would Betty.

I invite the reader, on that note, to approach these humble musings in the spirit in which they were written, with a kind of holy listening and a playful heart. Perhaps you, too, will be found and “read” by the Word. Who knows what might happen next?

## **Part Two**

### **Lectio**

Jabez was honored more than his brothers; and his mother named him Jabez, saying, “Because I bore him in pain.” Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, “Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my border, and that your hand might be with me, and that you would keep me from hurt and harm!” And God granted what he asked (1 Chronicles 4:9-10 NRSV)

### **Meditatio**

In these two brief verses we find the summary of a man’s entire life: an epitaph. This memorial of Jabez’s life is carefully woven into a lengthy genealogy. The epitaph is a narrative containing both a prayer of supplication and at least the suggestion of a curse. Thus we find in this short text no fewer



than four genres. The primary literary forms of Chronicles are genealogies, lists, sermons or speeches, prayers, and a curious “unnamed genre” that is a somewhat midrashic narrative plus interpretation.<sup>14</sup> What we have in 4:9-10, then, is actually a literary microcosm of 1 Chronicles as a whole.

While much could be said concerning the nature and function of genealogies in the OT, for our purposes it is enough to note that the Chronicler<sup>15</sup> probably intended to survey “all Israel” in order to emphasize the continuity of God’s presence among God’s people through all times, even during national catastrophies such as the Exile.<sup>16</sup> The first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles traces the chosen people of God from Adam and Eve to the Exile under Nebuchadnezzar. It is necessary to the writer for the audience to connect themselves with generations of past Hebrews, particularly the line of Judah, for their sense of identity has been compromised by captivity.<sup>17</sup> While Jabez is located in the genealogy of the tribe of Judah his precise relationship within the lineage is unclear.<sup>18</sup> The purpose for his inclusion will be readily apparent in light of the author’s themes and method.

The post-exilic Chronicler, writing during the late fifth century B.C., is a court historian who writes from a priestly perspective. Both political and religious motives prompt him to write. In focusing on Judah the Chronicler wishes to highlight the positive aspects of the Davidic monarchy. Particular weight is given to the eschatological hopes associated with the Davidic line.<sup>19</sup> Concerned with preserving the hope of Israel which is to come through David’s line, the author exalts those who call on the Lord and submit their lives to his sovereignty. He uses them to demonstrate the connection between faithfulness to God and the fulfillment of Israel’s hope.

The temple cultus, priests and Levites, the doctrine of retribution and the condition of the human heart are primary theological themes in Chronicles. Kings are described in terms of their relationship to the temple and to God.<sup>20</sup> With their theology kings rise and fall, taking Levites, priests, and Israel with them. Second Chronicles concludes with the decree of Cyrus which permits the exiles to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple.

While a number of theories have been proposed, the most probable original audience for Chronicles was “the author’s own community and its purpose was to assure them of the value of their life, even under foreign rule: they as a community are sustaining the worship of God, which is the primary function of Israel, indeed, the chief purpose of the world’s creation.”<sup>21</sup> The remnant has come home to carry out its mission of living as the people of God. Will Israel learn from its past? That is the author’s question.

Along with other epitaphs<sup>22</sup> in Chronicles, the mini-narrative of Jabez serves the author’s purpose. Most of the Chronicler’s theological themes are found in this story. Jabez is from the line of Judah. He is an honorable man

despite the limitations of his life. Like Israelite children born in exile, Jabez is born under a curse. The saving grace that lifts him from the curse is his trust in God, which prompts him to seek a blessing. God rewards Jabez for his faith. His story of hope and redemption could become the story of any Israelite who calls on the name of the Lord. It could become the story of all Israel.

What is most striking about Jabez' story is that his name is represented as a kind of curse placed on him by his mother.<sup>23</sup> With a bitter word-play Jabez' mother names him after her suffering. (The Hebrew word for pain is "atseb.")<sup>24</sup> We know nothing else about Jabez' mother except that she suffers. For the ancient Hebrew reader it is understood that a negative spiritual force is released upon Jabez in his mother's naming of him. "For the Hebrew just as a word was not a mere sound on the lips but an agent sent forth, so the spoken curse was an active agent for hurt. Behind the word stands the soul that created it."<sup>25</sup>

While the text itself does not say how Jabez experienced the curse, the implication is that his pain caused him to cry out to God for deliverance. It seems clear that Jabez would not pray for God to bless and protect him from pain and suffering (the curse of his name) if he was not threatened in some way by pain. Neither would he pray for his borders to "be enlarged" if he was not in some way confined. Was his confinement geographic, emotional, spiritual, relational? We cannot be certain, but there are hints in the text.

Notice the nuanced phrase: "he was more honored than his brothers." Was Jabez, like Joseph, the target of his brothers' abuse? Was he a younger brother like David, honored yet rejected, anointed but hunted down? The text does not tell us. What it does suggest is that he was favorably singled out from his brothers by the community. Sibling rivalry and resentment from the less-favored brethren is a *leitmotif* in OT narratives: Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, the list goes on. Could it be that his brothers were part of Jabez' pain?

Even though he is born under a curse, Jabez is exemplary in his faith. He turns to God who has the power to uncurse. Jabez cries out to be delivered from pain. Instead of allowing his suffering to make him "curse God and die," he lets it lead him closer to God.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore he asks for a blessing, the kind of blessing his mother did not give him, the kind that a good mother gives. Jabez' prayer is the most important thing he does. It is the essence of who he is. It is the secret to his liberation from the curse. God's word to Jabez is "Yes."

#### Oratio

Jabez stands as a testimony to God's grace for all who are born under

a curse, under an “evil word.” Jabez is incarnate hope for those whose identity is defined by their parents’ pain. His story is about the power of prayer, the power of the word of blessing, the mighty “Yes!” of God. To Jabez, God reveals himself as Redeemer, the one who becomes Healer, Protector and Life-giver. God becomes the mother Jabez never had, speaking the blessing Jabez needs. Jabez discovers that evil that is passed “from generation to generation”<sup>27</sup> is no match for the redeeming, blessing Word of God. A new life is possible for anyone.

Let us come alongside Jabez on his journey, and eat of Jabez’ bread. For many of us, in the words of the old spiritual, “feel like a motherless child.” God is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and omniman. The ball and chain of woundedness, that peculiar shame of being which was handed on to us, will not be broken by the Warrior or the Judge. The key to our unshackling is the blessed face of Mother, the ferocious protection, the sweet kiss of Mother love.

“Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb?” God asks his people.<sup>28</sup> Yes, Jabez answers. A mother can do such a thing. “Even these may forget,” God answers, “yet I will not forget you...I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands. Your walls are continually before me.”<sup>29</sup> Jabez looks at the scarred, outstretched hands of Mother God, reaching inside the walls, deeper than the pain, the memories, the everything. “As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you,” whispers Jesus,<sup>30</sup> bending low to lift his child to his breast.

“For this is that property in God which opposes good to evil,” writes Julian. “So Jesus Christ, who opposes good to evil, is our true Mother. We have our being from him, where the foundation of motherhood begins, with all the sweet protection of love which endlessly follows.”<sup>31</sup> For every Jabez among us Jesus offers words of blessing: “This is my body, which is given for you.”<sup>32</sup> “I came that you may have life,” Jesus insists, “and have it abundantly.”<sup>33</sup>

Mother Jesus is our “Pelican,” the one who feeds us with herself for she is the one who bore us, who nurses us, and who leads us in the way of life:

*Pie pelicane, Jesu Domine, me immundum munda tuo sanguine, cuius una stilla salvum facere, totum mundum quit ab omni scelere.*<sup>34</sup>

The Word Become Flesh is the Word of uncursing to all who will receive. Christ is God’s glad “Yes!” to deliver us from destruction and to transform our suffering into joy. For it is Jesus’ deepest joy to bless us:

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a



curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”—in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.<sup>35</sup>

Jabez is all of us, we who are born laboring under the first mother’s pain, we who are the seed of Adam. Jabez is creation, groaning beneath the weight of multiplied sin. Jabez is the universe crying for release. Thanks be to God for the mighty Word of hope:

All creation anticipates the day when it will join God’s children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And even we Christians, although we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, also groan to be released from pain and suffering. We, too, wait anxiously for that day when God will give us our full rights as his children, including the new bodies he has promised us.<sup>36</sup>

Jabez is beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, a garment of praise for a spirit of heaviness.<sup>37</sup> He is promise.

### Contemplatio

Not for myself alone, beloved Word Incarnate, do I lift my life in trembling gratitude for all that you have done to lift me from the pit of evil, from generations and generations of violence and shame, from selfhoods forged in Mama’s pain. Not for myself alone do I weep these tears of joy. Your Word is alive, sharper than a scythe, sharp-honed wisdom won from living into wholeness, the freedom of the Word. Your Word swells large within me, sweet frankincense and myrrh, a living Word of blessing which you speak to all the world.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>A new kind of “conversation” is emerging that is decidedly postmodern in its acceptance of the ambiguities both in scripture and in biblical hermeneutics. David Tracy, *Plurality and Ambiguity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), ix.

<sup>2</sup>Tim 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

<sup>3</sup>William M. Thompson, *The Struggle for Theology's Soul* (New York: Crossroad, 1996), 1-32.

<sup>4</sup>Of course, Barth himself did not like to be pigeonholed within neo-orthodoxy.

<sup>5</sup>Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, vol. 2, *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1956), 882-883.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 702, 723-727.

<sup>7</sup>Mark I. Wallace, *The Second Naiveté: Barth, Ricoeur, and the New Yale Theology*, Studies in American Biblical Hermeneutics Series, vol. 6 (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1990), 1-26.

<sup>8</sup>*Lectio divina* is commonly

<sup>9</sup>Barth, 697ff.

<sup>10</sup>The reader brings to the text his or her experiences, knowledge, questions, opinions, limitations, fears, hopes, all the conscious and unconscious material of life. Thus the questions and issues are dynamic, growing and changing with the reader's growth. For a fine introduction to a psychological hermeneutic of the Bible that draws from Jungian analysis, Barth and others see Wayne G. Rollins, *Jung and the Bible* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1983). Rollins speaks particularly of Barth on pp. 86, 98, 106, 115.

<sup>11</sup>Hebrews 4:12, NRSV.

<sup>12</sup>Barth, 702-703.

<sup>13</sup>I speak not only of canonized saints and "official sages" but also of the saints in the local church-the lovers of Jesus who know God intimately and who serve as companions on the journey.

<sup>14</sup>Roddy Braun, *1 Chronicles*, Word Biblical Commentary Series, vol. 14 (Waco: Word Books, 1982), xxiv.

<sup>15</sup>Tradition says the author was Ezra, but parts of the text suggest a much later writing, perhaps around 400 B.C. 1 and 2 Chronicles are one book, the final book in the Hebrew Bible.

<sup>16</sup>Braun, 3.

<sup>17</sup>cf. Ezra and Nehemiah.

<sup>18</sup>Jabez story is an example of the combination of local tribal history with a more formal genealogy (ibid., 4-5). The only other biblical mention of Jabez is 1 Chron 2:55, which names Jabez as the city occupied by the descendants of Hur (through Salma's line).

<sup>19</sup>Braun, xxxii-xv.

<sup>20</sup>1 Chron 10:1-29:30 follows the reign of David, while 2 Chron 1:1-9:31 is a commentary on the reign of Solomon, followed by 10:1-36:23 which details the remainder of the kings up to the captivity.

<sup>21</sup>David Cliines, "Secondary History," in *Harper's Bible Commentary* [CD-ROM] (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc. 1988; Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997).

<sup>22</sup>1 Chron 2:3, for example, remembers Er the son of Judah as a wicked man whom the Lord killed.

<sup>23</sup>J.A. Motyer, "Curse," and A. Van Selms, "Balaam," *New Bible Dictionary* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed [CD-ROM] (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1982; Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997).

<sup>24</sup>We find a similar phenomenon in Hosea, where the prophet is commanded by Yahweh to name his children "Jezreel" (God Plants), "Loruhama" (Not Loved) and "Lo-ammi" (Not My People). Recall the naming of Jacob (Deceiver) and how he lived his name. The theme of the power of naming runs throughout the Bible.

<sup>25</sup> A. Van Selms, "Balaam," *New Bible Dictionary* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed [CD-ROM] (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1982; Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997).

<sup>26</sup>Job 2:9.

<sup>27</sup>Ex 34:7.

<sup>28</sup>Is 49:15a, NRSV.



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<sup>29</sup>Is 49:15b-16, NRSV.

<sup>30</sup>Is 66:13, NRSV.

<sup>31</sup>Julian of Norwich, *Showings*, Classics of Western Spirituality Series, trans. Edmund College and James Walsh (New York: Paulist, 1978), 295.

<sup>32</sup>Luke 22:19, NRSV.

<sup>33</sup>John 10:10, NRSV.

<sup>34</sup>"Deign, O Jesus, Pelican of heaven, me, a sinner, in Thy Blood to lave, to a single drop of which is given all the world from all its sin to save." Stanza 6 of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Eucharistic hymn by Thomas Aquinas, "Adoro Te Devote," *Jubilate Deo*, Casa Musicale Edizione (Bergamo, Italy: Carrara, 1980).

<sup>35</sup>Gal 3:13-14, NRSV.

<sup>36</sup>Romans 8:20-23, NLT.

<sup>37</sup>Isaiah 61:3.

For His Glory:  
Mission And Vision of the Smetzer Counseling Center of the Ashland  
Theological Seminary

by Michael Reuschling

The purpose of man is to glorify God and enjoy his company forever.  
(Westminster Catechism)

It wasn't so many years ago that reading the Psalms was much more of a duty than a delight for me. It wasn't that many years ago that the thought of praying, let alone "praying without ceasing," lead to more thoughts of drudgery than delight. And if you had told me, not that many years ago, that I would be spending hours alone with God, just enjoying His company, I would have politely dismissed you, at best, and harshly criticized you (at least in my mind) for not really knowing me at all, at worst. Yet all of these, enjoyment of God's words (and Word), delight in talking to and hearing from God, resting with great contentment in His presence, all of these have become my ongoing experience and blessing. God has faithfully been showing me His great love for me and for others through His kind and gentle and loving treatment of me. He has been answering my prayer that He transform me into the image and likeness of His Son, no matter what the "cost" might be. He has taken me at my word and honored my surrender of my all to Him. May He be praised forever for His great love toward us as His people!

In this and other areas, I have been reminded many times of the words of a Salvation Army officer quoted years ago on the Paul Harvey radio program. The officer was asked at Christmas-time what he thought of telling children tales of flying reindeer and the like, of filling their heads with such fantastic stories. His response was, "Flying reindeer? When I think of what God has done with this black heart of mine, flying reindeer is child's play!" And so it is for me and for many of us. The closest I have witnessed to miracles is in what God has done with this "black heart" of mine. Who I once was, and who I once feared I was (that one who would someday be found out and exposed), have been largely left behind, by the grace of God, and I come to see these "self-images" as the lies they were and are, as contrasted with His truth of who I am because of Him. I have come to see that God's words in Romans 14:4, *Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand*

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(NIV), words that I was mostly able to apply to my treatment of others, also apply to my treatment of myself since God tells me “*You are not your own; you were bought at a price.*” (1 Cor. 6:19-20, NIV). In these and countless other ways, He extends his love and kindness to me which, in turn, makes me want to extend them to others and lead them to Him.

Lest this turn into the random ramblings of a raving Reuschling, my point is that God has been glorifying Himself to me and in me in the ways described above. After so many years of trying to “*work out (my own) salvation with fear and trembling*” (Phil. 2:12, NIV), only under my own power and cleverness, only to fail time after time (after time), and after so many years of evidencing only paltry and measly spiritual “fruit” (hardly worth eating and precious little to nourish self or others), God’s unfailing love has rescued me from a spiritual desert and set my feet more firmly in His kingdom. Whether it is more remarkable or simply more understandable that this has taken place in a “mental health professional,” in someone with lots of degrees and lots of titles and lots of clinical experience, I will leave to the reader to decide. Suffice it to say that all of these degrees and titles and experiences did precious little to contribute to my enjoyment of God or my glorifying Him.

So we come to the mission and vision of the Smetzer Counseling Center of Ashland Theological Seminary. What is it that the Lord would have us to do in this place and in this ministry? The mission statement of the Smetzer Counseling Center states,

*The Smetzer Counseling Center of Ashland Theological Seminary exists to glorify our great and gracious God! We strive to bring His comfort to a hurting and heavy-laden world through training exceptional Christian counselors, obedient to the Master’s command to “Go and do likewise.”*

We believe that the Smetzer Counseling Center is, first and foremost, a gift from God. A gift to those of us privileged to work there, a gift to the students who will be trained there, a gift to Ashland Theological Seminary, and, finally, a gift to those “hurting and heavy-laden” ones who will receive God’s comfort through this ministry. This author saw a need for a training laboratory for counseling students upon first being hired at ATS in the Fall of 1997. At that time, the Seminary president, Dr. Fred Finks, and the Pastoral Counseling department chair, Dr. John Shultz, graciously agreed to make available money and space for a modest lab for student training. In what seemed like very short order, it was announced that Mrs. Smetzer had donated one million dollars for the creation of a counseling lab to train Christian counselors and minister to the community! It was as if God was saying, “Yes, you do need a training center,



but I've got something much better in mind!" This began the dream and vision of what God might do and would have ATS to do in and through this ministry.

First, and foremost, the mission and vision of the center is to glorify God. Throughout my twenty-plus year career in mental health, I have had the opportunity, and occasionally the privilege, of working in a variety of settings. These have included private practices, group practices, community mental health agencies, non-profit mental health and family service agencies, for-profit corporations providing mental health care, and in-patient psychiatric settings, among others. While many of the mission statements of these organizations contained lofty sentiments and aspirational language, the reality of day-to-day operations usually betrayed the stated mission. The "actual mission statement" of some of these organizations could, more honestly, have been stated as "Circle the wagons" (in an agency where an "us (staff) versus them (clients)" mentality was prominent), "Go for the gold" (in a for-profit corporation much more interested in earthly treasure than in any other kind), or "Divide and conquer" (in an organization headed by an insecure and even paranoid leader intent upon maintaining his position and power). Day-to-day reality has a way of eroding even the loftiest of ideals until mission statements are only resurrected in annual reports and fund-raising efforts. In many of the organizations mentioned, any glory sought was usually self-glory.

*"First, and foremost, the mission and vision of the center is to glorify God."* How will God be glorified in this ministry and place? He will not be glorified by the self-effort, clinical cleverness, professional degrees, nor licenses of those ministering therein. My experience and the experience of many of my colleagues speak to the ultimate emptiness of such "resources." Rather, He will be glorified by those of us ministering in the Center fixing our eyes on Jesus as *"the author and perfecter of our faith"* and by considering Him, so that we do not *"grow weary and lose heart"* (Heb. 12:2-3, NIV), so that we do not elevate self, and so that we are not sidetracked in the "weeds" of our clients' woes (Matt. 13:3-23, NIV). It is God who will glorify Himself in his setting, to and in and through those devoted to His glorification. Our "job" will be to earnestly and faithfully seek Him in our own lives and in the lives of our clients, intent upon pleasing Him and, in return, being rewarded by Him, especially through the privilege of being participants in a glorious endeavor (Heb. 11:6, NIV). Those of ministering in the Center must be devoted to Him, first and foremost, or we will be devoted to self or to others at the expense of glorifying Him.

Personally, one of my primary motives for involvement in the Center is to see what God will do in a place devoted to His glorification. Having spent most of my professional career seeking self-glorification (no matter how lofty my sentiments and rationalizations), I now desire to see Him glorified and

clients truly comforted. While it was my privilege to work in and to lead many fine organizations, with many dedicated and gifted professionals, most of this time and energy was driven by motives other than His glorification. I have also seen the baser side of professional mental healthcare, with its petty territoriality (sometimes at the client's expense), its rampant bureaucracies, and its all-too-frequent clinical impotence. For once in my career, more importantly, in my Christian journey, I want to see what God will do in a place and ministry devoted to His glorification. If He, in His sovereignty, decides to do nothing in the Smetzer Counseling Center, then to Him be all glory! However, I have this sneaking suspicion (more accurately, this eager expectation) of what He will do in this place.

Those of us who will minister in the Smetzer Counseling Center must "*strive to bring His comfort to a hurting and heavy-laden world...*" The best definition of Christian counseling I have ever found is contained in Paul's letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 1:3-4, NIV) which says *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.* It is because of God's comfort to each of us in the troubles we face, that we learn more about His great and unfailing love for us. In this way we are greatly comforted. His comfort is manifested in a myriad of ways, not the least of which are the kind and gentle encouragers He sends our way at such times. As we grow in His love, as we realize more and more in the depth of our heart how much He loves us, we are then enabled and empowered to love Him and others more ably and healthily. *We love because he first loved us* (1 John 4:19, NIV) and so loving, we are commanded to *love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sin.* (1 Peter 4:8, NIV). Perhaps we will best glorify God and bring comfort to others by showing clients God's great love for us all. I have often remarked that the mental health professions are a "growth industry," as there seems to be no shortage of pain, quite the contrary, there seem to be increasing levels of anxiety and other forms of distress. Ultimately, the only true and lasting comfort will be found from the great Physician and not from clinical cleverness nor from the greatest human compassion.

Who will God use to provide such comfort to a "hurting and heavy-laden world?" Those "exceptional Christian counselors" who will be "*obedient to the Master's command to 'Go and do likewise.'*" Academic excellence has been a core value of Ashland Theological Seminary since its inception, whether explicitly stated or implicitly practiced. Such excellence has been evident in the training of countless godly men and women for a variety of ministries, including pastoral counseling. While academic excellence will be critical in providing needed comfort, thereby glorifying God, it must take a back seat to

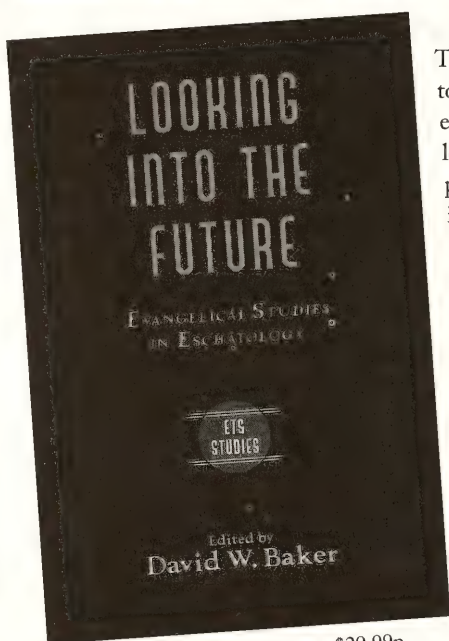
the more essential core values of Scripture, spiritual formation, and community, or, another of ATS' "core values," servant leadership. It is only by acknowledging one Master (and that He is not "me") and by being obedient to Him that true comfort will be provided and true freedom occur. The Smetzer Counseling Center will strive to equip exceptional Christian counselors, "shepherds" of their respective "flocks," who will demonstrate "technical and clinical proficiency" energized and enlightened by a vibrant and vital faith. The mental health world and profession does not need more "proficient clinicians," the world needs the Life and the Light and the Truth and the Power. These are the type of "exceptional Christian counselors" the Center aspires to train and disciple.

When it's all said and done, when we all stand before His throne at the final judgement, may we all hear the Lord's words from Mat. 25:23 spoken to us, *Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!* It is toward this end, toward these words, and toward honor of the Word that we press on. May God find us faithful.



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Leadership Character: A Matter of Trust  
Richard Parrott\*

Leadership is the process of influencing others to reach a common goal. Influence is the *sine qua non* of leadership. Without influence, leadership does not exist. Leaders develop a pattern of behavior used to influence others. This pattern includes the way a leader responds and relates to others in order to influence them toward the accomplishment of the groups goals.

Character is the *"aggregate of qualities that distinguish one person from another"* (American Heritage Dictionary). If you speak of a person as displaying "strange character," you mean they exhibit a pattern of behavior that distinguishes them from their normal pattern. If the pattern is consistently different, you may refer to them as "quite a character." If you break your normal pattern of relating and responding, you may say, "I was out of character."

When you speak of a person as having "moral character," they exhibit a pattern or quality of behavior that distinguishes them from an immoral person. Much leadership talk on character is aimed at "moral character." Moral character makes you a good person. However, it takes more than being a good person to provide good leadership.

A person of "leadership character" has a quality or pattern of behavior that distinguishes them from people who are not leaders. Leaders display patterns of relating and responding that influence the actions of others. Leadership character is the habit or pattern of behavior that provides good leadership.

If you habitually say one thing and follow through on it, if you habitually stand up for the greater good of the organization, if you habitually reconsider a decision when the situation has changed, if you habitually learn from others, then you are providing a pattern of good leadership – you display leadership character.

However, if you habitually say one thing but do another, if you habitually back down under pressure, if you habitually push ahead with your original plans even when the situation has changed, if you habitually refuse to learn from others, then you are providing a pattern of poor leadership – you lack leadership character.

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\* Richard Parrott (Ph.D., Oregon State University), is Executive Director of the Sandberg Leadership Center and of the Doctor of Ministry Program at ATS.

- \* What is the pattern of behaving and relating that provides good leadership?
- \* What is the spiritual foundation of good leadership character?
- \* How is good leadership character developed?

These are the questions discussed at a Roundtable Convocation held at The Sandberg Leadership Center on the campus of Ashland Theological Seminary, October 25-27, 2001. There were 25 participants representing business, government, nonprofit organizations, academics, and the church. Four keynote speakers set the direction for the discussion. A brief excerpt from each address is presented in this article.

**Lovett H. Weems, Jr.**

President of Saint Paul School of Theology  
in Kansas City, Missouri.

A leader who consistently demonstrates quality of character is reciprocated with followers who place trust in their leader. Trust is *"firm reliance on the integrity or ability of a person"* (American Heritage Dictionary). Lovett Weems reflects the significance of trust in the leader in this personal story.

Seminary presidents spend much time raising money. Years ago I heard the statistic that large gifts tend to come after a dozen or so visits, often by the president. I was close to that statistical average with a woman in her nineties. She had ample resources, no family, close ties to the church, interest in our school, yet had never given a single gift. I scheduled yet another visit with her by scheduling a flight with a lengthy layover in her city so I could take her to dinner, as was our usual pattern.

When I arrived at her home, she was not dressed to go out. She indicated that she was not feeling well and perhaps we could visit for a few minutes and then I could head back to the airport. We talked briefly in her living room. Then, as we were standing at the door as I was leaving, she said simply, "I trust you." I knew then that we would receive a major gift. She left half of her estate to the seminary for student scholarships.



That was the day I learned that the term “development” was no mere euphemism for “fund raising.” It became abundantly clear to me that people give out of trust and that trust grows out of relationships and experience that engender such trust.

The level of trust that exists within an organization and toward leaders is crucial to the effectiveness of leadership. When trust is limited, it is difficult for progress to take place. Conversely, in places where a high level of trust has been developed, remarkable change can be accomplished with a minimum of acrimony and delay.

A leader’s trust is won very slowly, but it can be lost quickly. Once lost, this trust is very difficult to regain in that leadership setting. People may give us a leadership position through election or employment. However, the credibility needed to lead must be worked out among the people with whom we serve. It is trust from those with whom the leader works most closely that gives a leader the essential element of credibility.

**Valerie K. Brown, CPA**

Executive Director and founder of the Church Financial Management and Leadership Institute, Assistant Professor of Management at the Samuel D. Proctor School of Theology.

Leaders need support structures that protect and validate the trust placed upon them. Valerie Brown shared a wonderful, biblical illustration focusing on financial trust. Read the story and consider the question, “How can a leader build systems and structures that protect and validate trust such as ‘being honest’ and ‘keeping promises’?”

Trust is lifted up as the paramount character trait for leaders in the church, yet we find violations of trust every day. The Bible teaches us that we are our brothers’ keepers. We find in the Word of God in the book of Ezra an example of how the church can become the “brothers’ keeper” of the

financial officers by instituting checks and balances. In Ezra 8:24-26 we find these words:

“I appointed twelve leaders of the priests...to be in charge of transporting the silver, the gold, the gold bowls, and the other items that the king, his council, his leaders, and the people had presented for the temple of God. I weighted the treasure as I gave it to them and found the totals to be...”

This passage was written during the rebuilding of the Temple. People and leaders gave money to the priests for the rebuilding of the Temple. The people surely “trusted” the priest and other workers in the Temple, yet they still counted what was given to the priest prior to giving it to them. The priests were required to transport all that was given back to Jerusalem. Later, after the journey to Jerusalem, we find in Ezra 8:33:

“On the 4<sup>th</sup> day after our arrival the silver, gold, and other valuables were weighed at the Temple...everything was accounted for by number and weight and was officially recorded.”

The priests were held ‘accountable’ and there were checks and balances put in place to ensure that the priests were not even tempted to misappropriate or steal any items entrusted in their care.

It is wise for a leader to build personal systems of accountability rather than wait for followers to rise up and demand such a structure. What is your personal accountability system for maintaining your trustworthiness?

**Bill Perkins**

Founder and president of the Million Mighty Men, author of *Awaken the Leader Within* and was one of three contributors to the *Leadership Bible*.

Integrity is the character quality of a leader that, over time, fosters genuine trust in leaders. Bill Perkins describes integrity and shares a story of testing.

Integrity is the foundation upon which the character of a leader will stand or fall. Whether you're leading a company, a church, a family, a battalion or an athletic team—those you lead want to know they can trust you.

The word *integrity* speaks of someone who is “whole or complete” and has the same root word as does the word *integrated*. A leader of integrity has taken the principals that govern his life, internalized them, and integrated them into every area of his life. A leader of integrity isn't like a weathervane that changes direction with every shift of the social winds. He's like a compass that is internally magnetized so it always points north regardless of what's happening around it. He is honest at work *and* at home. He keeps promises *even* if it means a financial loss. He speaks well of his clients in their presence *and* behind their back. He doesn't treat his wife with respect in public and belittle her behind closed doors. A leader of integrity doesn't switch masks to win the favor of the audience he's playing for.

Because leaders of integrity don't pretend to be something they're not, with them, what you see is what you get, literally. And it's not that leaders of integrity are perfect—they aren't. But they're aware of their weaknesses and don't lead others to believe they have no personal flaws. When my friend admitted he cared for people but had a hot temper, his statement demonstrated integrity.

It's a fact of life that you never know when your integrity will be tested. That's a lesson learned by an ambitious nurse who was being considered to lead the nursing team at a prestigious hospital. The chief of surgery had just completed



an operation in which she was assisting when he snapped off his surgical gloves and told her to close the incision. "But doctor, you've only removed eleven sponges. We used twelve." "I removed them all," the doctor declared. "Now close the incision." "No!" the nurse objected. "We used twelve sponges and there are only eleven on the table." "I'll take full responsibility," the surgeon said sternly. "Suture." "You can't do that," the nurse insisted. "What about the patient?" The surgeon smiled, lifted his foot, and showed the nurse the twelfth sponge, which he had hidden under his shoe. Smiling, he said, "You'll do. The nursing team is yours to lead."

The nurse passed the integrity test. She held to the highest standard of patient care and put it into practice—even when a promotion was at stake.

Everyday you'll face similar tests. They'll be unannounced. Some will be subtle and others will be in your face. Whether you know it or not those you lead will be watching you. They'll observe how you handle those unexpected character tests. As you allow the wisdom of Jesus to awaken the leader within you, your integrity will grow. As it does, those you lead will trust you more. As their trust grows so will their eagerness to follow you.

**Paul Blease**

Director of Advanced Training at  
Salomon Smith Barney in New York.

A loss of integrity comes from an inward "disconnect" as described by Paul Blease as he shares the story of the kind of conversations he has with some of the highest producers in the world of finance.

If you have ever been around extraordinary achievers, there is an edge, volatility, intensity, sometimes it comes out as intensity, sometimes as volatility. When it gets pathological, I get involved. I have found that all of our top producers have a high level of confidence. Confidence is based on the task: I can do it! When you feel confident, you feel

confident about your capacity to do something. It is a task orientation. However, there is another element that comes into play: Self-esteem. Self-esteem asks, "Am I worthy?" I have found that if there is a disconnect between confidence and self-esteem, volatility will emerge.

I work with people that have confidence bordering on arrogance coupled with low self-esteem. They can do the job, but they lack a sense of worthiness. This comes out in one-on-one conversations. It almost always stems from how they were raised. They are trying to prove someone wrong; oftentimes, fathers, sometimes other people.

One individual invited me to his home after a day of working with his management team. He indicated he had some individual issues that "I need to talk to you about". In the 5-hour conversation that followed, the disconnect between confidence in the job and personal work in the soul emerged. On one hand, there was this businessperson that was Machiavellian on the other side was this born-again Christian who had a wonderful family, wonderful church life and all the great stuff in life. This was a disconnect from his childhood, where he learned the classic, "I'll show you" type of behavior in response to a very autocratic, demanding father where nothing was ever good enough."

Everything in this man's life was designed to win favor, and, in our culture, you win favor through tangible accomplishments. This drives your confidence level very high but does nothing for your self-esteem. Self-esteem is, "Am I worthy in spite of...and without an reference to my performance." Brought up to be measured on his performance, he said that he had always been afraid that if he let down his guard, he would loose his edge and would cease to perform to his current level. He said, "This is what drives me."

I asked him if he understood that that is not what drives him. What drives him is how he is wired, "You are a type 'A' personality. You will achieve at this point, based on habit, based on who you have become. Why you achieve will

change if you bring this person that you are at home and in church into your business life. You'll still achieve, but the reason for the accomplishment will change. Rather than to prove your dad and everybody else wrong, it will be to fulfill and fuse who you are with what you do. Your mission will change. The 'why' will change. Your sense of fulfillment will dramatically improve. Your stress level will dramatically decrease. You live in a constant state of stress. Every time you fail to achieve marginally, your self-esteem is again hammered. It is a no-win scenario."

What you see in the volatility issue is a lack of maturity. A person will stop growing, emotionally, at some point in childhood. As an adult you put a façade over the child. You dress for success and you are more articulate. You have possessions. You look like an adult. But you are really a child saying, "I hope no one figures this thing out."

One of the problems is that when you have a high level of confidence, bordering on arrogance, people figure you can take it. They come at you head on. Then, you blow up. No one sees that low self-esteem beneath the façade unless they really know the person and they really love them.

The question I always get from people is, "How do I create high self esteem?" I cannot use the word "Christ" in a business setting so I use, "it's a spiritual element." It is a "spiritual connection." But, in this setting I have an audience that I can speak plain—it is called "grace." "Grace" says, "I love you, period!" That is the conversation I have with some of our largest producers in the Salomon Smith Barney organization.

\* \* \* \* \*

The task of leadership has not changed. Leaders move/influence people to work together toward the accomplishment of mission. What has changed is the situation of leadership. The leaders power to move/influence others no longer rests primarily in a position of having, but in a relationship of trust. Let me summarize the lessons:



\* The purpose of good leadership character is to engender trusting relationships so that leaders and followers can work together in healthy ways to accomplish the mission of the organization.

\* Leaders must take responsibility to develop systems, structures and supports that protect and verify the trust that is placed upon them.

\* The character pattern of integrity—speak the truth, keep your promise, and be authentic—will, over time and consistency, foster genuine trusting relationships.

\* Integrity is born out of an awareness of our own inward disconnects (brokenness) and the embrace of the grace of Christ that reconnects (heals) us as whole persons.

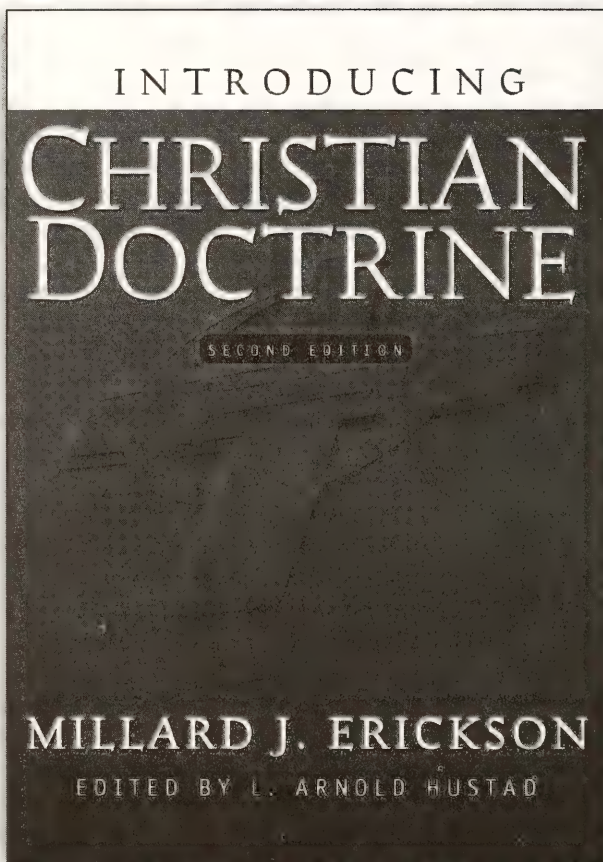
If you want to learn how to get people to trust you, begin by learning how you can trust God.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

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This article is based on excerpts from the new publication “Leadership Character”. This book contains the writings and reflections of the 25 participants of a Round Table Convocation on leadership character held October 25-27, 2001 at The Sandberg Leadership Center, Ashland Theological Seminary, 910 Center Street, Ashland OH 44805. Copies of the book may be purchased for \$10 from The Sandberg Leadership Center. Email leadon@ashland.edu.

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**For Such a Time as This:  
A Situational Model of Leadership**

by William D. Dobbs\*

Leadership is the challenge of the hour. Leadership in the church in the 21st century demands responsiveness to change. Situations change. Ministry opportunities change. Persons who would provide leadership in the context of change can benefit greatly from knowledge of how other leaders have dealt with change. For those of us in the religious community, we often begin with biblical leaders and then look to more contemporary models. The current model of choice seems to be Servant leadership, but I believe there are other models that are equally valid. I propose to reflect on the leadership of Moses as a different model of leadership. We will examine other biblical examples to see how they relate to the model and then discuss this model in light of current leadership theory.

**Moses as the Archetype**

The first thing we discover as we read the book of Exodus is that there is a crisis affecting God's chosen ones who had come to Egypt with Jacob. This is the first criterion of Situational leadership. Some crisis must arise which causes those who know God's name to cry out for God's deliverance. This cry for deliverance is, I believe, the second criteria. It implies a realization that self-sufficiency doesn't work, repentance, and a willingness to renew the covenant. In Egypt, the sons of Israel and their descendants "groaned under their slavery, and cried out. Out of the slavery their cry for help rose up to God. God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (Exodus 2:23c-24 NRSV).

Even as the Israelites were crying for deliverance, God took notice of their plight and began to prepare a leader for them. From Moses' birth, God was preparing him for the task of leadership that lay ahead. The infancy narrative and the early career of Moses all contribute to making Moses the kind of person who could speak to Pharaoh and survive the wilderness for 40 years. This is not to suggest that God's power and presence did not play an integral part in Moses' ministry post "burning-bush." It is meant to state that God's gift of life experiences is the third criteria for a Situational leader.

All of which brings us to the call of Moses and three more criteria for a Situational leader. We begin with the Divine-human encounter. "The angel of the Lord appeared to Moses" (Ex. 3:2 NRSV). In Moses' case, this angelic appearance came in the form of a bush that was burning, but not consumed by

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the flame. As Moses turned aside to see why the bush was not burned up, he experienced the miraculous authentication of God's call. To which, Moses responded, "Here I am" (Ex. 3:4 NRSV). This personal response to God's call then becomes the sixth criteria for a Situational leader.

A seventh criterion for a Situational leader also becomes visible in Moses' call experience: the leader's willingness to step outside the box of conventional thinking. We see that in Moses' turning aside to look at the burning bush. We see that in his appearances before Pharaoh. And we see that in his wilderness trials with the stiff-necked and stubborn people he had led to freedom through the sea. Moses is not bound by the things that "have always been done that way." And, in the end, Moses is not bound by the image he has of himself. He does try to keep the shackles of impossibility firmly in place, but God will have none of that and, in the end, Moses was indeed able to get beyond his own vision of himself. So there are two subsets of this criterion: 1) the ability to see reality in new ways, and 2) the ability to see oneself with new eyes.

Following Moses acceptance of God's call we find the next three criteria of the biblical model. In verse seven, we discover God giving Moses a vision for his life, his ministry. He would be the one whom God used to lead God's people to freedom. This vision would require Moses' being willing to go where God led, to be faithful to God when the going got rough, and to trust God when he could not see the way clearly. In addition to a vision, God also gave Moses a promise that God would be with him. Moses would not be alone. He could go wherever he was led, even into Pharaoh's palace, secure in the knowledge that God was with him and God's power was in him. He was not promised a journey without difficulties. He was promised that God would give him whatever he needed to do God's will. His was the confidence of a Paul who was "sure that nothing in all creation could separate him from God's love" (Romans 8:38-39 NRSV). God gave him others as well, to walk beside him in the journey: Aaron, Hur, Jethro, Joshua and Miriam all served to strengthen Moses in his leadership role. Some gave him advice, some gave him a supporting arm, and some joined him in song but all were instruments of God in Moses' life. And finally, there is a spiritual relationship or intimacy between God and the human leader God has called "for just such a time as this" (Esther 4:14 NRSV).

In summary, then, we find 10 criteria for a Situational leader in the biblical account of Moses:

- 1) Presence of a Crisis
- 2) Cry for deliverance
- 3) Gift of life's experiences
- 4) The Divine-Human encounter

- 5) Divine authentication of the call
- 6) Human response to God's call
- 7) Willingness to step outside the box.
- 8) Vision.
- 9) Promise or Assurance.
- 10) Spiritual Relationship or Intimacy.

To this list, we need to add an eleventh criterion that would be true for every model. There needs to be the authentication of the "fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22 NRSV). In any authentic biblical leadership model, we can look backward in time and see the evidence of God's handiwork. Unlike Abimelech (Judges 9ff.) who gave no evidence of God's Spirit in his leadership and quickly lost his power and his life, biblical leaders demonstrate the ability to stay the course and give evidence of God's continued affirmation. In the Moses model of Situational leadership, God's authentication is visible in the continual demonstrations of God's power from the court of Pharaoh to the top of Mount Sinai. God authenticated Moses' leadership in the sight of the people. Moses' was God's leader for that moment and those people.

#### **Other Examples of the Situational Leadership model.**

Many of the leaders named in the Hebrew Scriptures demonstrated some of the criteria but not necessarily all. For example, Judges 6 and following tell the story of Gideon. The Israelites were being oppressed by the Midianites, who were confiscating the food necessary for the survival of the people. They had done what was evil and finally came to their senses and cried out to the Lord. God appeared to Gideon while he was at work and called him to a divine task or vision. God authenticated that call and confirmed that God would be with Gideon (v.16). While we do not know much about Gideon's life experiences that prepared him for God's call, except that he was the son of Joash the Abiezrite, we do know that he "did as the Lord told him" (v.27). Gideon demonstrated an ongoing relationship with God. And there is the evidence of the fruit as Gideon and his small band of 300 prevailed over "the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the people of the east" (7:12 NRSV).

Or again, the story of Jephthah the Gileadite illustrates some of the criteria for a Situational leader. Consider: "the people did what was evil in the sight of the Lord" (Judges 10:6 NRSV) and then repented and "put away the foreign gods from among them and worshipped the Lord" (v.16). While the call of Jephthah came from the elders of Gilead, the authentication came from God as Jephthah proved victorious. Jephthah demonstrated a trust in God and a relationship with God that culminated in his faithful keeping of his vow even at the cost of his daughter's life.

I believe that Deborah fits the pattern, even though God is not named in the usual way. Certainly she came forward in response to a call at a crisis

moment for the Hebrew people. The Israelites had again done "what was evil in the sight of the Lord" and they had "cried out to the Lord for help" (Judges: 4:2ff). And her prophecy of God's word for Barak, son of Abinoam, was authenticated by victory. This victory came because God sent the rain (Judges 5:4-5).

Or consider Queen Esther. Again, the name of God does not appear, but can there be any doubt that she was prepared by her life experiences and called by God's servant "for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14 NRSV). The *Additions to the Book of Esther* in the Apocryphal Books does name God as the source of her leadership. However, the Esther account by itself leaves little doubt God is the power behind the scenes and the One who authenticates her leadership.

As we come forward in time to the period of the new covenant, we would have to alter the criteria in order to name Situational leaders from the followers of the Way. There is not a sense that the people recognized their sinfulness or their arrogance, repented of their actions, and cried out to God for deliverance. It is possible to find those, like Stephen in Acts 6, who respond to a call authenticated by God's Spirit and come forward for a specific time or situation. However, they do not give evidence of leading a group of God's people or acting of God's behalf to save the people, with the singular exception of the man from Nazareth. Let us look more closely at Jesus.

It may have been an intentional design to validate Jesus in Jewish eyes by the synoptic writers, but no other account of a New Testament personality so closely parallels the account of Moses' life. Beginning with the God-protected infancy narratives, the life stories of these two leaders offer many similarities. For Moses and Jesus, there are angelic appearances, divine authentications of a divine call, personal responses, and God-given visions for each one's message and ministry. And there can be no denying that Jesus' appearance in history came as a response to the sinfulness of the people. An interesting note in Luke's gospel is that Jesus also came into the public sphere at a time when the people were responding to a message of repentance proclaimed by the Baptizer. There is the image of both men calling the people to think "outside the box" of the ways the people had always done things as covenant people. Finally, there is that sense of conversational intimacy with God that so marked the leadership of these two central figures in the salvation history of God's people. To see these parallels is not new, of course. And there are many in the literature who would name Jesus as a Servant leader. I would like to suggest, however, that reading the gospels with an Old Testament filter allows one to posit that Jesus is also the chief example of a Situational leader in the New Testament. Truly, Jesus was a leader for such a time as his.



### **Situational Leadership in Contemporary Leadership Models.**

From looking at Moses and Jesus as Situational leaders, I would like to move forward in time to reflect on a contemporary model and then suggest several principles of Situational leadership that would be available to the reader. The thinking in this portion of the article has been influenced by the work of Robert Quinn: *Change the World*, and the trio of Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem and James Furr: *Leading Congregational Change, a Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey*.

An examination of Martin Luther King Jr.'s life reveals several similarities to the criteria we have already established: First, King was prepared by his life circumstances for the moment of his call. His birth, his early education, his formal training and his natural gifts of intellect and personality all conspired to prepare him for a public ministry which could bridge the gap and speak to both the "palace of Pharaoh" and the people of his birth. King could speak with eloquence in the language of those who held the power, and King could speak to the hearts of those in bondage. Secondly, there was a "burning bush" moment in King's life. Rosa Parks would not take her usual place in the back of the bus and King turned aside from his pastoral work to play a pivotal role in leading the successful Montgomery boycott. I would suggest that God called Martin in those days and Martin stepped forward, all without fully knowing where the journey would lead. Further, I would suggest that God had given King a vision of the possible future into which he would lead his people. God even allowed King to echo Moses' words and feelings at having been to the "mountain top" to see a future he would never enter. And, by King's own words, God strengthened him in those moments when his own people murmured against him:

The words I spoke to God that midnight are still vivid in my memory. "I am here taking a stand for what I believe is right. But now I am afraid. The people are looking to me for leadership, and if I stand before them without strength and courage, they too will falter..." And almost at once my fears began to pass from me. My uncertainty disappeared. I was ready to face anything. The outer situation remained the same, but God had given me inner calm... I knew now that God is able to give us the interior resources to face the storms and problems of life.<sup>1</sup>

There is also evidence of the fruit of King's leadership. Even he was allowed to see some of the changes that his leadership brought forth. He got to experience some victories as well as the struggle. And there is something else...

another criteria which has become evident by looking backward from King through Jesus to Moses. Each of these Situational leaders was able to commit themselves totally to something that would take them away from their usual places of comfort and familiarity. They would each commit themselves to a vision that ultimately claimed their lives. It was not death or martyrdom that they sought, however. They simply gave themselves over to the power of the vision and the leadership of God. Finally, like the other leaders we have mentioned, M.L. King had a deep and intimate relationship with God. He had a consciousness of being where God intended him to be.

We have looked briefly at several persons in history, ancient and modern, as we have considered Situational leadership. Is there anything we can apply to ourselves in all this? Are we Situational leaders? Do we even want to be? What contemporary leadership principles carry over from the biblical models?

I do not believe we choose to be Situational leaders. I do believe that we can choose to respond to God's call, and, depending on the circumstances, may be seen to have been a Situational leader. I believe that God is already at work in us, by the means of grace, to equip us for leadership. I do not mean to suggest that each one of us will be a Moses or Martin Luther King, but I am convinced that God is preparing us for our moment to respond to God's call. Family of origin, early childhood experiences, life lessons and opportunities for learning, successes and failures all contribute to making us who we are at a given moment in time. Some of us will not recognize God's handiwork; some of us will not know God's name. Some of us will not know the situation to which we are being called. We will not have heard the cries of the people. But there will come a moment (or moments) when we will have an opportunity to "turn aside and see this thing" which God is doing outside the ordinary of our experience. It will require us to make a commitment to leave the comfort of our cultural "safe place" and follow the leading of our God-given vision and be true to our God-shaped values. Many of us will not be able to leave our flocks or family business or even our holy work. Some of us will be so preoccupied with self that we will not even see the burning bushes or hear the voice from the wilderness. But for those who do, their lives will never be the same. They will be invited into a closer relationship with God that will strengthen them for the difficult moments and days ahead. And they will see the evidence of God's hand upon their witness. People will be influenced. Lives will be changed. The Kingdom will come closer and God will be glorified.

#### Endnotes

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## A Tale of Two Providences

John Sanders\*

This is a review of three books on divine providence: *Still Sovereign: Contemporary Perspectives on Election, Foreknowledge, and Grace*, eds. Thomas R. Schreiner and Bruce A. Ware. Baker Books (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1995, 2000), 356 pages. *God of the Possible: A Biblical Introduction to the Open View of God*, Gregory A. Boyd. Baker Books (Grand Rapids, Mich. 2000), 175 pages. *God's Lesser Glory: The Diminished God of Open Theism*, Bruce A. Ware. Crossway Books (Wheaton, Ill. 2000), 240 pages.

Debate on the doctrine of divine providence has been heating up in recent years. A spate of books, journal articles and conference papers has appeared for and against "freewill theism" in general and the openness of God model in particular. Throughout this essay I will interact the broader topic while concentrating on these books. These three books tell the stories of two different views of divine providence: two from a strong Calvinistic (meticulous providence) perspective and one from an openness/Arminian (general providence) perspective.

### Still Sovereign

The thirteen essays in *Still Sovereign* attempt to present a case for Calvinism and rebut many of the arguments found in two volumes edited by Clark Pinnock which sought to defend Arminianism.<sup>1</sup> The book was first published in two volumes in 1995, but in 2000 a number of essays were omitted in order to republish it in a single volume. The editors, Schreiner and Ware, are to be commended for producing a fine collection of essays that are, for the most part, well researched and well written. The book is divided into three parts: biblical analysis (nearly two-thirds of the book), theological issues and pastoral reflections (very brief).

The purpose of the book is to "defend the classical view of God's sovereignty" from the corrosive acids of our culture that exalts the human over the divine. Arminian theology, they claim, is pushed around by cultural forces and exalts the human over the divine such that the divine glory is stolen away from God and given to humanity because, for Arminians, humans are the "ultimate determiners of salvation." (pp. 11, 49, 101, 237, 286 and 323). "The doctrines of grace are questioned" today (p.18). The "plain teaching" of scripture is distorted by Arminians who, as "rationalistic" logicians, impose their system onto scripture.

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Several points need to be made regarding these general claims before surveying the chapters individually. First, by “the classical view” and “the doctrines of grace” the authors mean the Augustinian-Calvinist tradition. However, the claim that they represent “the” classical view cannot be supported for the simple reason that, as some of the authors in the book note, the early fathers along with the Eastern Orthodox, Anabaptist, Arminian, Wesleyan, and Pentecostal traditions along with many Roman Catholics have always affirmed “freewill theism” and rejected theological determinism. If any tradition has the right to the title “the classical view” it would seem the older and more widespread strand of the tradition, freewill theism, has the better claim. If the authors simply claimed they were defending the “classical Calvinist” view, I would have no qualms. Second, throughout the book the authors decry as “caricature” when Arminians claim that humans are puppets in the Calvinistic schema, yet they repeatedly claim that humans “save themselves” according to Arminian theology. Each side fails to see itself in the description of the other. Moreover, both camps believe the “plain teaching” of scripture supports their respective views. Both sides affirm the clear teaching of scripture to be exactly opposite positions. How shall we resolve these contestations? Will appeal to more scripture be of benefit? Should we conclude that the hermeneutical skills of one side are depraved while those of the other are elect? Apparently, on this issue, the Bible is capable of being read by very devout Christians in quite different ways. It would seem that some epistemic humility is in order. The doctrines of human finitude and the noetic effects of sin (sin distorts our reasoning) ought to chasten us from making extravagant claims about the correctness of our theologies. Moreover, if culture affects the thinking of all of us, then we should be cautious about claiming that our theological opponents are the only ones “pushed around” by cultural forces. None of our theologizing escapes being conditioned by cultural trends, and it is high time evangelicals not only admit this, but make it an active part of our hermeneutical processes. It simply will not do to have one side making the “culture” accusation of their opponents while claiming themselves to be cultural virgins.

Now let me turn to the individual chapters. The first three chapters of the book present a defense of specific sovereignty (everything that occurs is specifically ordained by God to happen) from the Old Testament, the gospel of John and the Pauline corpus. They cover many of the standard Calvinist texts used to support meticulous providence and so provide a beneficial survey. The opening chapter by Ortlund correctly argued that, according to meticulous providence, God cannot be said to “respond” to creatures since this would make God dependent upon creatures (p. 30). It makes no sense to say that everything that happens is precisely what God has ordained to happen and then claim that God is responding to something we do. I shall return to this point latter in the



article. Ortlund's discussion of the Old Testament texts on divine repentance is very poor. He fails to interact with any of Terence Fretheim's detailed studies of these texts.<sup>2</sup> If someone is going to claim that the three dozen or so texts affirming that God changes his mind do not really inform us what God is like, then they need to take Fretheim's thorough discussions into account. Moreover, in this chapter and throughout the book the well-know "pancausality" texts are cited and interpreted to teach that God specifically ordains each and every calamity that occurs (e. g. Amos 3:6; Isa. 45:7). It would be good to see these authors interact with the work of Fredrik Lindström who thought the Bible taught divine pancausality, but, after a thorough analysis, came to the conclusion that the biblical authors do not teach this.<sup>3</sup>

Thomas Schreiner presents a well-researched and irenic study of Romans 9 and individual election. The chapter seeks to counter two views. First, Schreiner argues that Craig Blomberg and others are wrong to see Romans 9 referring to "historical destiny" rather than salvation. Although the original references about Jacob and Esau in the Old Testament may well refer to peoples (nations) and not individuals, Schreiner believes that Paul applies these texts to the salvation of individuals. Though I think Schreiner is correct that Paul is applying these texts to the topic of divine election to salvation, I do not believe Paul is addressing the Calvinist-Arminian formulation of this debate. It is so difficult for us today not to read our debates into the text. Schreiner also rejects the notion that Romans 9 is about "corporate" rather than individual election. Here he discusses William Klein's book on the topic.<sup>4</sup> Schreiner uses the analogy of buying a professional baseball team to argue that election involves specific individuals, not merely an abstract entity. When you purchase the franchise (an abstract entity), he says, you also purchase all of the individual players and coaches that are included. Well, this is true if you buy an existing franchise, but if you purchase the right to a brand new franchise, say the Geneva Supralapsarians, there are no individual players or coaches at the time of purchase.

John Piper's chapter argues that though the Arminian "pillar texts" (e. g. Jn 3:16; 1 Tim 2:4) speak about God's love for all, they do not override unconditional election. He argues that there are "two wills" in God: one that all people enjoy salvation, and the other that only those specifically chosen by God will enjoy salvation. Piper, following Jonathon Edwards, correctly identifies a similarity here between the Calvinist and Arminian perspectives since Arminians claim that God wills that all people enjoy salvation and also that God wills that only those who exercise faith in Christ will enjoy salvation. Hence, there are two wills or, as I would prefer to say, two areas about which God makes decisions. The difference, he notes correctly, between Arminians and Calvinists lies in where each view locates God's higher commitment.

Whereas Arminians locate it in God's desire to grant us the freewill necessary for a relationship of love, Calvinists locate the higher will in God's desire to manifest "the full range of God's glory in wrath and mercy" (p. 124). For Piper and others in this book, God's glory would not be fully displayed unless God both saves some and damns others.<sup>5</sup> Calvinists are often asked why God does not redeem everyone when it seems it is within the divine power to do so. The typical Calvinist response is to say that God is not obligated to save anyone (p. 245). But, according to these authors, if God were to save everyone then the full force of God's wrath would not be displayed and if none were saved then the full force of God's love would not be displayed (e.g. p. 85; 124). That is, the divine glory needs some people to be redeemed and some to be damned. Though there is nothing in the creature that obligates God to save some of them, it is the case that the divine glory obligates (necessitates) God to save some people and to damn others in order for the divine nature to be fulfilled. Consequently, God needs human beings for redemption and damnation in order for God himself to be fulfilled.

By far the longest chapter in the book is Wayne Grudem's fine study of the warning passages in Hebrews. He argues that the specific terms used in 6:4-6 may legitimately be read as describing either genuine Christians who have fallen away or as referring to non-Christians who were attracted to the gospel but then lost interest. However, he argues that only one of the terms used in Hebrews to describe the truly regenerate is found in 6:4-6. From this and other arguments he concludes that the warning passages are directed against people who have experienced many of the blessings of the gospel but who were never actually saved in the first place. Without taking anything away from Grudem's solid work, I would like to suggest that John Wesley was correct that arguing about whether genuine Christians can become unsaved is a moot point until we first answer: How do we know whether one is actually saved now? After all, both those who say genuine believers can lose their salvation and those who argue that those who fall away were never genuine believers to begin with, are looking at precisely the same people.

D. A. Carson picks up this issue in his essay on assurance. He has a helpful study on what should and should not be the basis of our assurance. Though our works are some evidence that we are truly saved, Carson believes the Puritans went overboard with this. He suggests that our assurance of salvation is based primarily on the objective work of Christ and secondarily on our own works and the witness of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, he says that we will not attain any "absolute, epistemologically tight Christian assurance" (p. 276). Nonetheless, he does claim that Calvinism provides a psychological comfort that is impossible for Arminianism. This is because, for Calvinism, the believer's security is in God, not in any introspection of conscience or

observation of works. However, Carson overreaches here because the doctrines of unconditional election and the perseverance of the saints provide assurance for the believer only if we can confidently identify ourselves as one of the elect.<sup>6</sup> Granted, our assurance is in Jesus. But how do we know that we actually are in Jesus? The Arminian will question whether she is deceiving herself that she is a genuine Christian while the Calvinist will wonder whether he is truly one of the elect. After all, perhaps God has simply ordained that I “look like” one of the elect when I am actually not. How can I know the difference? Evangelicals still have a ways to go in developing a theology of assurance.<sup>7</sup>

S. M. Bough’s chapter on foreknowledge claims that it means “to choose,” and so the Arminian view of election will not work. Although the chapter contains some helpful research, Bough repeatedly makes claims that go way beyond his evidence (an error not limited to his chapter alone, however). Even more distressing is the caustic tone and use of fallacious reasoning against his opponents. For instance, because the openness of God view agrees on one point with Socinianism, Bough calls it “Neo-Socinianism.” Since view A has one point in common with view B, views A and B must be identical. Given such reasoning, we could arrive at all sorts of interesting connections. For instance, Baptists agree with Roman Catholics that Jesus is the messiah so Baptists must be “Neo-Catholics.” Since Calvinists agree with Stoicism on divine determinism, Calvinists are “Neo-Stoics.” It is unfortunate that some evangelicals use such deceitful practices in order to disqualify their opponents a position at the dialogue table.

Bruce Ware’s chapter seeks to demonstrate that the biblical teaching on divine election, calling and grace supports a Calvinistic soteriology. Ware begins by noting that “Calvinists and Arminians have more points of agreement than disagreement.” Nonetheless, he believes that Calvinism provides a better cumulative case for explaining the data of scripture for these three doctrines. Ware surveys a number of favorite Calvinist texts and explains them clearly.

Schreiner’s second chapter in the book seeks to refute the Wesleyan notion of prevenient grace. He briefly explains and then critiques four arguments used in favor of prevenient grace. Schreiner concludes that the idea of prevenient grace is not taught in scripture but is an imposition read into scripture in order to solve logical problems and justify God’s love. Though I do not agree with all of Schreiner’s exegesis, I do believe that he is correct that some of the biblical texts used to support the notion of prevenient grace do not do so. True, the texts may be read in a way compatible with the Wesleyan teaching, but they do not necessarily support the Wesleyan teaching. However, I see the same thing being done by many of the authors of this book—the texts used to support Calvinism may be read in ways compatible with Calvinist teaching, but they do not necessarily support Calvinist teaching. Doing theology



is much more complex than most evangelicals allow. There is no easy way to “disprove” either Calvinism or Arminianism for they are complex theological formulations integrating scripture, logic, personal and social proclivities, and traditions. Evangelical theology needs to come of age, recognize these complexities and learn to live with epistemic humility.

J. I. Packer’s chapter articulates the nature of God’s love, both universal and particular. Packer says that “God loves all in some ways” and “he loves some in all ways” (p. 283). God grants blessings to all, but loves some in a way that regenerates them. He calls this teaching “strong meat, too strong for some stomachs” such as for the Arminians. Of course, Arminians do not find the meat too strong, but too rancid. Moreover, Packer claims that Arminians do not allow for the mystery of God’s ways, but instead make God into the image of a giant man who is frustrated and disappointed. However, Arminians may counter that they are not anthropomorphizing God, but simply acknowledging God’s theomorphizing humanity.

The three final chapters discuss sovereignty in daily life, prayer and preaching. Jerry Bridges claims that the type of sovereignty we affirm makes a big difference in the way we live our daily lives. He says that every detail of our lives, including every instance of blindness, cancer, and loss of job, is woven by divine sovereignty into the framework of God’s eternal plan. Consequently, we can trust God that everything that happens to us is for the best: to “bring glory to himself and good to his aching child.” Does Bridges mean that each and every instance of suffering is for the individual good of the sufferer? The rape and murder of a young girl is for her good? It would be more believable if Bridges said, following the Stoics, that such instances of evil were somehow for the overall good rather than each individual’s good. Furthermore, he says that God ordains everything that happens to further the divine glory. But he also says, “that all our plans should aim for the glory of God” (p. 296). My question is: if everything, including my sin, does, in fact, further the divine glory, then what sense does it make to say we “should” aim for the divine glory? How can we fail to enhance the divine glory given meticulous providence? More on this below.

A typical criticism of Calvinism is that it reduces the motivation for evangelism and the urgency of prayer. This is incorrect, however, as C. Samuel Storms shows. For the Calvinist, prayer and evangelism are the divinely ordained instruments through which God has decided to work. God not only ordains the end that Gary will be saved on a particular day, he also ordains the means by which Gary will hear the gospel and be saved. Hence, Calvinists have certain motivations for prayer and evangelism even though they may not be all identical to those available to Arminians. Regarding our prayers for the unsaved, Storms says that our prayers do not render “God’s choice contingent.”

God's decisions, according to the authors of this book, are never dependent upon our prayers. Inconsistently however, Storms twice says that God is "pleased to ordain that he will save them in response to the prayers of others" (pp. 316, 320). Use of the word "response" by a proponent of meticulous providence is inappropriate because it implies that God is reacting to something we have done which God has not ordained. That Storms does not really mean that God "responds" to our prayers, however, is evident when he later says that "from the human perspective" it might be thought that "God's will for Gary is dependent upon me and my prayers" (p. 320). But God is not dependent upon my prayers since God also "by an infallible decree, has secured and guaranteed my prayers as an instrument." Hence, it "as though he were prevailed upon by prayer" but God is not actually prevailed upon. Earlier in the book, Ortlund correctly observed that, according to specific sovereignty, God does not respond to humans (p. 30). What Storms should have said is that God may be said to save Gary "after" my prayer but not in response to my prayer.<sup>8</sup> Why then do Storms and others continue to say God "responds" to our prayers? Could it be that the cultural forces of American evangelicalism are shaping their theology? Evangelicals will not buy into a theology in which God does not respond to our prayers so it is not surprising that many Calvinists would fudge at this point.

I will close the review of this book by quoting Carson: "we will always have some mystery. The important thing will be to locate the mystery in the right place" (p. 273). This is quite correct and brings out a fundamental difference in theologies. Whereas Arminians locate the mystery in heart of sinful humanity—why humans spurn the divine love is the mystery of iniquity—Calvinists locate the mystery in the heart of God—why God chooses some for salvation and not others.

### God of the Possible

General providence, the view that God does not meticulously control everything, is the second "tale" of providence. Greg Boyd defends this view in his popular level introduction to the open view of God. He first wrote much of this material for pastors and laity in his denomination, the Baptist General Conference, who were receiving misinformation from Boyd's critics. The openness of God view affirms that God created *ex nihilo* and sovereignly chose to endow humans with the libertarian freedom necessary for a relationship of love to develop. Openness teaches that God enters into genuine give-and-take relations with us. God, of course, does the initiating, but unlike classical theism in which God cannot receive, proponents of openness believe that God does receive some things from us. God truly responds to our prayers and our actions. Open theism is, in large part, a derivation of Arminianism, which is why Bruce

Ware calls it “neo-Arminianism” in contrast to “classical Arminianism.” There are two areas in which openness departs from classical Arminianism. First, whereas most Arminians have held that God is timeless (experiences an eternal now) open theists maintain that God, at least since creation, experiences before and after (temporal progression). Second, and clearly this is the lightning rod issue, classical Arminians have affirmed what is called **simple foreknowledge** whereby God simply “sees” all that we will do in the future but God does not determine or cause us to do what we will do. Thus, God has **exhaustive definite foreknowledge** (EDF hereafter) of all future contingent events. Proponents of openness, however, affirm a view called **presentism** wherein God knows all the past and present exhaustively and that part of the future that is determined to occur (e. g. earthquakes and God’s decisions to act unilaterally). God does not have EDF of future human decisions. Rather, God has beliefs about what we will do based upon our habits, character, circumstances and the like. Hence, some of the future is definite or closed and some of the future is indefinite or open. Some of the future is open and does not become definite until God and humans make it definite by their actions.

The bulk of Boyd’s book is given over to an explication and defense of presentism as a biblical and theologically sound understanding of divine omniscience. The debate is not whether God knows all that can be known (omniscience). Rather, it is about what can be known. The debate concerns “the nature of the future: Is it exhaustively settled from all eternity, or is it partly open? That is the question at hand, nothing else” (p. 17). For Boyd, God is omniscient. It is just that the future actions of beings with libertarian freedom do not yet exist so there is nothing there for God to know. Just as omnipotence is not denied by saying that God cannot do the logically impossible, so omniscience is not denied by saying that God cannot foreknow the logically unknowable. Half of the book is devoted to expounding biblical texts, both those that are used to support the open view and explaining how an open theist might interpret the texts typically used in support of EDF.

In chapter one Boyd explains the varieties of EDF and the reasons why thoughtful Christians arrived at this view. He then seeks to interpret texts such as the prediction of Peter’s denial and Psalm 139:16 in ways compatible with presentism. Chapter two marshals a wide array of biblical texts used to support presentism. Some of these evidences are: (1) God expresses “regret” (Gen. 6:6; 1 Sam. 15:10); why would God do that if he always knew these things were going to happen? (2) God confronts the unexpected where God thought Israel would do one thing when she, in fact, did another (Isa. 5; Jer. 3:19-20, 19:5). (3) God gets frustrated with Moses’ resistance (Ex. 4:10-15) which seems incongruous if God always knew Moses would go. (4) God tests people to



discover what they will do (e. g. Deut. 8:2 and Gen. 22 where God tests Abraham and says "now I know that you fear me"). (5) God speaks in indefinite terms of what may or may not be (Exod. 4:1-9), and uses words such as "if" (Ex. 13:17), "perhaps" (Ezek. 12:3), and "might" (Jer. 26:19). (6) God strives with people trying to get them to believe and is grieved when they resist him (Isa. 63:10; Eph. 4:30; Acts 7:51)—why would God strive with people he always knew would not believe anyway? (7) People may be blotted out of the book of life (Rev. 22:19), and (8) God changes his mind in response to what people do (Exod. 32:14; Jer. 18; 2 Kings 20:1-6).

Chapter three explores the difference openness theology makes in everyday life. Boyd addresses the liberating nature of living with possibilities instead of prescribed pathways for divine guidance. He rejects the "myth of the blueprint," the notion that God has everything laid out for us to follow. Boyd claims that the urgency of prayer in the open view is the strongest of any theological position because God may or may not do something because we prayed or failed to pray. The problem of evil and suffering is discussed, wherein Boyd argues that we need not feel anger at God for "doing this to me" since these are not part of the divine plan. He tells a particularly poignant story of a young woman whose husband abused her and destroyed her life's dream of becoming a missionary. Though much of the practical applications of openness theology are in line with classical Arminianism, there are distinctives, particularly when it comes to divine guidance since, according to open theism, God does not know with absolute certainty what beings with freewill will do in the future. Some classical Arminians think this a terrible defect in openness thought since they suggest that if God possesses EDF, then if God foresees something is going to happen that God does not want to happen, God can prevent it from happening. However, Boyd is correct that the Arminian view of simple foreknowledge—where God simply sees the future—does not do God any good. The reason is simple: if God knows the actual future, then God cannot change the future since this would make his foreknowledge incorrect. For example, suppose that God has eternally foreseen my death in a car accident on a specific day. Your prayers that I arrive safely are useless since God has foreseen the actual, not the possible, future and cannot change it. The problem with the traditional Arminian view of foreknowledge is that God is "cursed with the ability to foresee disaster while being unable to do anything about it" (p. 101). Simple foreknowledge is useless for providence.

The final chapter of the book answers eighteen common questions and objections raised against the open view.<sup>9</sup> For instance, has anyone else ever held this view in the history of the church? How do you explain the anthropomorphic expressions in scripture about God's arms and eyes? Does not the open view "limit God?" What is the relationship between God and time?

Although his answers are brief and written for a popular audience, Boyd does a good job overall of providing possible answers to these questions. I say “possible answers” because not all proponents of openness agree with one another regarding all the details of the position. At times, Boyd uses biblical texts that do not support the open view. For instance, rhetorical questions in scripture (pp. 58-59), though compatible with openness, do not provide evidence that God does not know the future. Nonetheless, Boyd accomplishes his objective of giving a readable introduction to the open view.

### God’s Lesser Glory

Bruce Ware’s book is an invective against open theism.<sup>10</sup> He rails against publishers, such as InterVarsity, Baker Books and Christianity Today, for even discussing this issue. He laments that the Baptist General Conference, after several years of debate, failed to rule openness theology out of bounds. Fortunately, says Ware, the national meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention passed several changes to their doctrinal statement, one of which affirms that God has EDF, thus ruling out presentism as a viable theory. However, Ware fails to mention that the state conventions have to ratify such changes and the largest groups of Southern Baptists, including the Texas Baptist Conference, have refused to endorse the changes. Ware and John Piper seem to believe that open theism is the most serious threat to the church today. It will “destroy churches” if left unchecked.

The book is divided into three parts: describing open theism, critiquing open theism biblically and theologically, and criticizing how openness theology applies to the Christian life. Chapter two correctly identifies open theism as a subset of classical Arminianism and clearly explains the arguments used by open theists to critique the views of omniscience known as simple foreknowledge and middle knowledge. As with *God of the Possible*, this book also deals primarily with whether or not divine omniscience includes EDF.

Chapter three gives some of the theological arguments for the open view. For the most part, Ware states these correctly, though with some exaggeration. Though Ware acknowledges that any view that affirms libertarian freedom for humans entails God taking risks, he believes that the open view implies a greater degree of risk taking on God’s part than in classical Arminianism (pp. 48-9). However, this is wrong. For simple foreknowledge, it may be said that once God decided to create this world and then previsioned all that would happen in this world, God “learned” about all the things humans would do against his will—all of the risks God would take. When God begins to create he is aware of all the risks. However, this does not lessen, in the least, the actual risks God takes because what God provisions is not under his control. Hence, a God with simple foreknowledge takes precisely the same risks as does

a God with present knowledge.<sup>11</sup>

In the next chapter Ware attempts to rebut the biblical arguments (see the summary in Boyd above) used by open theists in support of their view. Ware opens the chapter by claiming that the denial of EDF is the watershed issue separating open theism from all forms of “classical theism” including Calvinism and traditional Arminianism (p. 66). Again, this is not the case. Though Ware correctly states the providential uselessness of simple foreknowledge (p. 37), he fails to understand the wide-ranging import of this. If the traditional Arminian view offers no providential advantage over presentism, then EDF simply cannot be the watershed issue. In the history of the church there have been two major understandings of God. The first, developed by the early fathers and held by the Eastern Orthodox and Arminians, is that God has chosen to be, for some things, affected (conditioned) by the creatures. God grants humans libertarian freedom such that God does not control our actions. God genuinely responds to our prayers and what we do. I call this major strand of theology “freewill theism.” The other major understanding of God, developed by Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin and others, denies that God is in any respect affected by creatures—God is impassible. God grants humans compatibilistic freedom whereby we are free to act on our strongest desires, but our desires are determined by forces beyond our control. God never responds to what creatures do, rather creatures respond to what God has decreed they do. This view, known as classical theism, affirms that God is absolutely unconditioned by any being external to God, so God is strongly immutable and impassible.

The great divide separating the freewill and deterministic theistic traditions is actually (1) divine conditionality (including impassibility and immutability) and (2) the type of freedom God decided to grant humanity. Classical theism affirms God’s absolute unconditionedness and compatibilistic freedom while freewill theism affirms that God is affected by us and that God grants humans libertarian freedom. At times, Ware admits that his real gripe is against all forms of freewill theism, including traditional Arminianism, and not merely against openness (pp. 42, 48, 143, 153, 208, 214, 223, and 226). Though Ware spends most of his time addressing the denial of EDF, he seems to understand that this is not the crucial issue (though highlighting it will certainly help sell books).

If one of the two watershed issues between classical and freewill theisms is divine unconditionality and its attending doctrines of impassibility and immutability, then what are we to make of Ware’s claims that God is affected by us in that God has emotional responses to what we do? God does not, he says, change in his purposes, will or knowledge (p. 73), yet God can “literally change” (pp. 73, 92) in his emotional experiences to what we do as



those situations arise in time. Ware calls this “relational mutability.” Several comments are in order. To begin, if Ware is repudiating strong formulations of impassibility and immutability and saying that we can actually affect (condition) God, then he should beware of throwing around the charge of heresy since the Council of Chalcedon anathematized anyone who says God is passible or changeable.

Moreover, it is not clear to me what Ware believes about God’s relationship to time. It seems that he affirms divine timelessness or sempiternity (all time at once), yet he says, “God literally sees and experiences in this moment what he has known from eternity” (p. 73). However, this seems to suggest that a timeless deity experiences time which, as Aquinas and Calvin clearly understood, is contradictory. Timelessness just means that God does not experience “moments.” A number of evangelicals want a timeless being who nonetheless experiences events along with us in history. This is due, in part, to our desire for a “personal relationship with God.” However, the great luminaries of the faith (as well as contemporary Christian philosophers) understood that a timeless being cannot experience any sort of change since change involves time.<sup>12</sup> A timeless being cannot be said to plan, deliberate, respond, regret, grieve, or get angry. That is why classical theists have maintained that these biblical expressions are anthropomorphisms that do not actually inform us about the way God is. If Ware wants to attribute responding and grieving (p. 92) to a timeless deity, then he will have to explain how it does not contradict the metaphysics of timelessness.

In a similar vein, it is incoherent to affirm both that God’s will is never thwarted or frustrated in the least detail (p. 149) and also affirm that God has changing emotional responses to what we do. How can a deity who ensures that everything happens precisely as he wants it to happen, grieve over what happens? Is God unstable? Again, the great classical theists understood that these affirmations are contradictory. Clearly, Ware either has to revise more of the divine attributes of classical theism and move closer to freewill theism or he must return to standard classical theism.

Chapter five presents numerous biblical texts in support of God having EDF. The bulk of the chapter focuses on Isaiah 40-48. Ware interprets these chapters to mean that God puts his very claim to deity to the test: “If I can accurately predict what will happen then I am God, if I fail, then I am not God. “[H]is exclusive claim to deity, set in contrast to the false gods, demands that God *as God* get *everything* right” (p. 109). Ware does a good job of bringing out much of the meaning in these passages. It is disappointing, however, that he does not interact with Boyd’s explanation of these same texts. According to Boyd, God does not put his deity on trial by claiming to accurately predict the future, but by claiming to be able to announce something and bring it about

(Isa. 46:10-11, 48:5; see Boyd, pp. 29-31). In other words, the test concerns divine omnipotence not foreknowledge. There are a number of biblical prophecies that are problematic for proponents of presentism to explain and Ware discusses them. More work needs to be done by proponents of presentism on various biblical texts.

Ware's remarks on "conditional predictions" are somewhat baffling. "*Conditional predictions*, by their nature, give to God a 'back door,' as it were. If things don't go as he hoped or thought, he can always change what he had said. In all such cases, we *cannot rightly expect exact fulfillments* of these predictions" (p. 137, emphasis his). After belaboring the point that God puts his very deity at stake by predicting the future with 100% accuracy, Ware now says that we cannot expect God to accurately predict the future all of the time. If that were not bad enough, what sense does it make to affirm that God's will is always accomplished (p. 149) and also to affirm that things may not "go as he hoped or thought?" How can they fail to go as God foreordained they should go?

In the next chapter, Ware raises three objections to open theism: it has an excessively immanent view of God, it believes that God takes risks, and it implies that God cannot achieve all of his purposes. Are these criticisms of openness only? "To a great degree, the openness proponents are saying only what their Arminian colleagues have long argued" (p. 143). Yet, Ware believes that the denial of EDF exacerbates these problems. As I explained above, however, simple foreknowledge functions for divine providence in precisely the same way presentism does.

Chapters seven through nine critique openness while explaining the Calvinistic view of prayer, guidance and suffering. Ware writes: "if divine guidance is an evolving reality, it would seem that one would need regularly to keep seeking God's leading on each specific question or burden, even if one had sensed strongly just what the Lord's leading was on that matter." If so, "How can you tell whether to persevere in difficulty?" (p. 181). This is an accurate description of the openness position, but if it is a "problem," it is a problem for Ware's theology as well. The Calvinist God may be guiding you into something for a time, all the while planning to lead you out of it after a time. Calvinists do not believe God guides you into one thing forever. True, whatever you are doing at the moment is precisely what God has ordained you to do, but God may have ordained you not to persevere in some endeavor and so stop what you were doing and switch to something else. Hence, the Calvinist, just as much as the open theist, has to regularly seek God's leading and question whether God wants him to persevere.

Regarding suffering, Ware accuses the Arminian God of being "foolish" to create a world of beings with libertarian freedom over which God

cannot control. Using the Joseph story, Job, and Romans 8:28, he argues that the "Christian" God is in total control such that every "evil" that occurs is actually for the good. Ware does observe, correctly, that openness does not entirely solve the problem of evil since God could prevent each and every instance of moral evil, but chooses not to do so. Again, it is disappointing that Ware fails to even mention the responses open theists have given to this question.

In the final chapter Ware claims that, "In my view, every other understanding of divine providence to some extent diminishes the sovereignty and glory of God. It brings God's wisdom and power down to the level of finite human thinking" (p. 220). Moreover, "The conclusion that God's glory is diminished by libertarian human freedom is impossible to avoid" (p. 226). Here, Ware lays his cards on the table and indicts every form of freewill theism, including traditional Arminianism, for diminishing the divine glory. Again, this is why the watershed issues dividing this debate are divine conditionality and human freedom—not the denial of EDF! Moreover, there is a subtle problem in Ware's accusation: is it actually possible for freewill theism to rob God of glory if God exercises specific sovereignty? No, it is not, and the reason why is easy to see. According to Ware, God foreordains everything that happens and everything that happens is for his own glory. Nothing occurs that can detract from the divine glory. Well then, how can freewill theism (including openness) lessen God's glory if God ordained it for his own glory? Is God, for his own glory, foreordaining that his own glory be diminished? Hence, given Ware's own theology, it is impossible for open theism to lessen God's glory and so the thesis (and title) of Ware's book is shown to be incoherent on Ware's own terms.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> *The Grace of God, The Will of Man: A Case for Arminianism* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 1989) and *Grace Unlimited* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1975).

<sup>2</sup> Terence Fretheim, "Divine Foreknowledge, Divine Constancy, and the Rejection of Saul's Kingship," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 47, no. 4 (Oct. 1985): 595-602; *Exodus, Interpretation* (Louisville: John Knox, 1991); "The Repentance of God: A Key to Evaluating Old Testament God-Talk," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 10, no. 1 (June 1988): 47-70; "The Repentance of God: A Study of Jeremiah 18:7-10," *Hebrew Annual Review* 11 (1987): 81-92; *The Suffering of God: An Old Testament Perspective*, Overtures to Biblical Theology (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984).

<sup>3</sup> See Lindström, *God and the Origin of Evil: A Contextual Analysis of Alleged Monistic Evidence in the Old Testament*, Frederick H. Cryer trans. (Sweden: CWK Gleerup, 1983).



<sup>4</sup> William Klein, *The New Chosen People: A Corporate View of Election* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990).

<sup>5</sup> For criticisms of Piper's thesis see my *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1998) pp. 217-219, 241-242.

<sup>6</sup> See the excellent essay by William Abraham, "Predestination and Assurance" in Pinnock, *Grace of God*, pp. 231-242.

<sup>7</sup> It is small wonder why evangelicalism has popularized an answer to this question by promoting a liturgical rite which, when performed, grants one assurance that one is a genuine believer. By reciting the "sinners prayer" parents and friends assure you that you are an actual Christian now.

<sup>8</sup> See my *God Who Risks*, pp. 269-271 for more discussion.

<sup>9</sup> For more questions and more answers from a number of proponents of openness visit the websites: [www.opentheism.org](http://www.opentheism.org) and Christus Victor Ministries at [www.gregboyd.org](http://www.gregboyd.org)

<sup>10</sup> Not all classical theists are so caustic, however. For a more civil discussion that makes use of many of Ware's objections see Chris Hall and John Sanders, "Does God Know Your Next Move?" *Christianity Today* (May 21, 2001): 38-45 and (June 11, 2001): 50-56. Also see our forthcoming book with Baker, *Divine Debates*.

<sup>11</sup> I have explained this in some detail in my "Why Simple Foreknowledge Offers No More Providential Control than the Openness of God," *Faith and Philosophy* 14, no. 1 (1977): 26-40 and the abbreviated version of this in my *God Who Risks*, pp. 200-206.

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of the literature on God and time see *The God Who Risks*, p. 319 n. 78.



Old Testament Prophecy  
Recent Publications  
by David W. Baker\*

Over the last several years, numerous studies of various elements of the Old Testament prophetic books have appeared. In this essay, a number of these will be reviewed and evaluated. This article is not intended to be comprehensive.<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

E.W. Heaton is a British Old Testament scholar whose 1977 introduction to the prophets has recently appeared in a new edition.<sup>2</sup> The author self-consciously addresses the needs of the lay reader rather than the scholar, so the footnotes rarely cite secondary sources, mainly indicating scriptural passages supporting the claims made in the text. There is a useful bibliography at the end of the book, so those who wish to pursue matters raised further may do so. It has been updated with works as recent as 1993.

Heaton, in a very readable, and very English, style, divides his book into ten chapters. 'Making Sense of the Old Testament' explores the history of OT interpretation from the early period through the middle ages to today. He sees it best understood as the records of a peoples encounter with their God, and the reinterpretation of these stories as time went on. In chapter 2, the writing prophets are briefly introduced in the context of their times, which for Daniel is the second century BC, making him not properly one of the regular prophetic books, and for Isaiah is three distinct periods, since it is seen as a composite rather than a unity. 'The Vocation of the Prophets' explores their societal roles as both individuals and institutional functionaries. Here he overviews various topics such as ancient Near Eastern parallels and the puzzling urim and thummim. 'The Preaching of the Prophets' looks at the prophetic message forms and the righteousness of their person.

In an analysis of individual prophetic books, Heaton divides the chapters into 'judgment without promise' (Amos., Isaiah, Micah). He sees these as lacking hope, so needing to relegate passages of promise such as Amos 9:11-15 to an addition by a later author. This is a more liberal approach to Scripture where what should be found in it based on some interpretive preunderstanding controls what is actually written in it. 'Salvation through judgment' (Hosea,

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Jeremiah), 'Salvation after Judgment' (2<sup>nd</sup> Isaiah, Ezekiel), and 'Salvation in the Restored Community' (Haggai and Zechariah, anonymous prophecy [mainly 3<sup>rd</sup> Isaiah, with excerpts from other prophets as well]) round out the brief overview of the content of the books. The final two chapters explore the proposed movement from oral sermon to written text, as well as later editing and interpretation, and a look at Daniel against the background of apocalyptic, including that of the Qumran community and the early church. Heaton also touches on the topic of Jesus and prophecy.

The book will properly find a place in college and seminary libraries, where it provides a succinct, readable introduction to the more liberal view of the prophets. Teachers and preachers will be well served by reading it critically, especially noting what the prophets actually said as recorded in Scripture, carefully comparing that with the claims made here.

Another British author, John Eaton, almost simultaneously produced another elementary level introduction.<sup>3</sup> He has his eye toward the reader, who would probably be in college or a Bible study, in that he includes various questions for personal research, discussion, consideration (looking for contemporary parallels) which are good stepping stones beyond the book and into the Book. All of the prophets receive at least some mention and discussion, and a 2 page bibliography supplies resources for further reading. His approach to such matters as dating is mainstream, assuming but not arguing for a late Daniel and tripartite Isaiah. For those looking for a readable text from this perspective, Eaton will serve you well.

In a much briefer and more popular format, John Sailhamer of Western Seminary has one of the books in his "Zondervan Quick Reference Library" on Biblical Prophecy.<sup>4</sup> It provides one page summaries on a number of aspects of prophecy which are designed to be readable in no more than a minute. There are seven sections in the book. "Introduction," "Hermeneutics," "Biblical Theological Foundations" discussing the kingdom of God and the various biblical covenants, "OT," "NT," "Central Themes" of restoration, redemption, messianism, Israel and the church, the tribulation, rapture, millennium, and heaven, and "Theological Systems," i.e. covenant theology and dispensationalism. There is also a concluding glossary defining fifteen terms.

The list of topics shows Sailhamer's dispensational interests, but he does do an admirable job in presenting various positions in such a brief space. The volume, as the entire series, would do well in a church library.

## Studies

A. Ronald E. Clements, an British Baptist and emeritus professor in London, has written on aspects of the prophets for a number of years. In a 1996

he collected fifteen of these studies and published them together with an introduction in which he provides an overview of 'The Interpretation of Old Testament Prophecy, 1965-1995.'<sup>5</sup> Clements' own work provides a useful entrée into the field over this period, since he is one of the major contributors. His introduction focuses on four major issues of the period, form critical studies of the prophets (what kind of literature are their writings?), Isaiah (unity/diversity, historical background), formation of the literary form of the prophets' writings, and interpretation of the prophets.

The essays themselves are collected into six parts. The first concerns the historical and political background of some of the prophecies, as well as the messianic hope, the second explores aspects of the interpretation of Isaiah (7:10-17 and its messianic interpretation, Deutero-Isaiah's development of earlier themes, and the book's unity), the third, Jeremiah (1-25 and the Deuteronomistic History, and hope in the book), the fourth, Ezekiel (prophecy in crisis times, and redactional history of chapters 1-25). The last two parts look at apocalyptic (the reading of Scripture and the canonical process, and apocalyptic's origins) and the prophetic canon (structuring of the prophetic oracles as a literary device, prophecy as literature and theology, and prophetic editing) respectively.

The book is a fitting summary of the work of a leading scholar in this field. It contains useful material for the serious student of the prophets, and should find a place on all seminary and Bible college library shelves. There is material of interest to the pastor, but the more scholarly nature of the work would probably mean that her book funds could better be spent elsewhere. Also, since the articles are all reprints, they all are available from the original sources.

B. The Israeli scholar Uriel Simon has also produced a volume of seven collected essays on the prophets, all but one published previously.<sup>6</sup> Simon teaches at Bar-Ilan University in Israel and directs the Institute of Jewish Bible Research there. His goal in this volume is to provide a literary reading of the text, paying special attention to what the narrator says and how he says it. This type of study is based on the objective text more than any putative sources, whether literary or historical. Factuality is secondary to literary craft in this type of study.

This series of studies goes beyond others reviewed here in that it involves the 'former prophets,' the historical books which provide the background for the 'latter' or writing prophets. The stories he studies are: Samuel's birth (1 Sam 1:1-28; 2:11a, 18-21) and call (1 Sam 3), Saul and the witch at Endor (1 Sam 28:3-25), David's confrontation by Nathan (2 Sam 10:1-

12:31), the episode of the young prophet and the old man of God (1 Kings 13:1-32a + 2 Kings 23:16-18), Elijah versus Baal (1 Kings 17-19), and Elisha and the Shunemite woman (2 Kings 4:1-8:6). All of these episodes show the importance of prophetic actions, providing a needed foil to the idea that they were just men of words.

This type of study is different from a commentary, in that it looks at a story as story, seeing it in its unity rather than as simply a collection of constituent parts. Plot and character play a larger role than do individual words and historical details, the grist of a commentary. This final form type of analysis is a welcome addition to, and even an advance over, studies which analyze and dissect a text to death. Here its life and vitality are explored. This is a technical study, however, and uses literary jargon and linguistic description which will need some work by the uninitiated in order to be able to understand. An interesting element for most readers of this review is the common reference to Jewish interpretations of the stories, and aspect which is too often neglected in Christian interpretation.

This volume should be in all libraries interested in biblical and literature studies.

C. A 1997 collection "offers an entrée into the methodological pluralism of biblical studies" (back cover).<sup>7</sup> It contains 7 chapters by as many authors on topics such as: new looks at prophecy in the Mari archives (Herbert Huffmon of Drew University), the nature of prophetic literature (David Petersen of Iliff School of Theology), rhetoric in Jonah (by the editor from the University of Capetown), the prophet's religious and social role (David Noel Freedman of UC- San Diego), charisma and the prophets (Ronald Clement, emeritus from Kings College, London), the unity of Isaiah (Rolf Rendtorff of the University of Heidelberg), the conclusion of Joel (by James Crenshaw of the University of North Carolina), and prophecy in art (with illustrations; by Zefira Gitay, an art historian also from Capetown). The book shows that an approach to a text or a genre cannot be monolithic, and that insights can be gained from numerous different vantage points. This book will be for more specialist libraries.

D. Three recent works study different aspects of the prophecy of Isaiah. They show the breadth and depth of topics and questions which can and must be addressed in biblical studies.

1. The broadest of these works is a collection of twenty-eight essays by as many scholars from around the world in honor of the sixty-fifth birthday and retirement in 1996 of the Dutch Catholic scholar W. A. M. Beuken.<sup>8</sup> This



is a useful and important volume in its own right, and well illustrates the various approaches which can helpfully illuminate a text.

The essays are divided into four sections. The first, 'Isaiah and his Book,' looks at aspects of the biblical book as a whole. Of the four essays in this part, two (by Clements and Hermisson, the latter in German) explore the central, and literarily uniting, motif of Zion, one (by Sweeney) explores Isaiah's reworking of the Davidic covenant in Isaiah, and the fourth (by Gitay), explores the act of reading, building on the author's interest in rhetoric and textual function.

Section two, 'Proto-Isaiah,' consists of eight essays. They illustrate different approaches and breadths of study, ranging from a study of historical information in Isaiah 1-39 (by Schoors), through a suggestion regarding literary origins (of 36-39, by Vermeylen), to analyses of much shorter text sections (1:29-31 as an early example on 'inner-biblical interpretation' of 6:13, by Williamson; the literary unity of 8:19-23, in German by van der Woude; whether 11:1-10 is to be seen as universal or particular, in German by Zenger; the linguistic area of domain analysis applied to 12:1-6, assisting in an appreciation of the communicative function of the text, by van Wieringen; an analysis of metaphor in general, and then concentrating on 25:10a, by Doyle; and a close reading of 27:10-11, by van Grol).

Section three, 'Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah,' includes seven articles. Their interest spans the identity of Deutero-Isaiah (by McEvenue, suggesting a woman, the female identified as the herald in 40:9), history and eschatology in Deutero-Isaiah (where Leene suggests that he 'borrowed the basic structure of his view of ...[these] from the Enthronement Psalms'); a form-critical analysis, using a discourse analysis of 40:12-42:13 to explore lawsuit, debate, and wisdom connections (by Dijkstra); a phrase in 40:20 (van Leeuwen); a close reading of 42:10-12 (by Prinsloo); the Cyrus oracle (44:24-45:7) illuminated by syntax, versification and structure (by Fokkelman); and the structure and redaction of 60:1-63:6 (by de Moor).

Section four, 'Intertextuality and Wirkungsgeschichte,' contains nine articles dealing with aspects of Isaiah being a user of texts produced by others (Gen 1-3 in 65:16b-25, by Steck, and a producer of texts and motifs used by, or at least found in, others (Ezekiel 20:32-44, by Lust; LXX 49:1-6 by van der Kooij; Habakkuk, by van Ruiten; Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-4:19, by Beentjes; Job 16-19, by Bastiaens; the rabbinic Pesiqta de Rav Kahana 16, by Teugels; Matthew's christology [Matt 1:23; 4:15-16], by Weren), and finally, the phrase 'knowing Yahweh' as it occurs throughout the Old Testament, by Vervenne).

While the articles are scholarly, and some quite technical, the breadth of topic should provide material of interest to all readers. Even those without

technical or literary competence in some of the areas will find useful and stimulating information here. Though probably only appearing in academic libraries, the volume does deserve a look by all interested in this, one of the key Old Testament books.

2. A more narrowly defined work by Hugh Williamson of Oxford University investigates the composition and transmission of Deutero-Isaiah.<sup>9</sup> He opens with a chapter on recent Isaiah study, showing evidence suggesting multiple authorship of the book and categorizing scholarship during the last century into six approaches to the authorship question, in particular as regards First and Second Isaiah. His particular interest for the volume is the "the extent to which, if at all, chapters 40-55 of Isaiah were directly influenced at the point of composition by the form which chapters 1-39 had assumed by that time" (27). In other words, were they originally separate works, or was Deutero-Isaiah (D-I) aware of and influenced in any way by Isaiah of Jerusalem, who he assumes to be two different people. He concludes that not only did D-I know the earlier work which he saw as being prophecy anticipating his own time, so felt free to use and edit earlier material to show the close connection between the periods and the two parts of the literary work. This useful, technical work will need to be consulted by all who are working on Isaiah and the history and development of OT prophecy.

3. The third, and most technical and topically narrow volume explores the subject of word-order, and variations within it, in Deutero-Isaiah.<sup>10</sup> Setting himself within the field, Rosenbaum states that "this study will utilize a functional approach to language, in particular Functional Grammar, as well as insights and terminology from Russian Formalism, Prague School linguistics and Discourse Analysis" (1). The functional approach explores how language serves as a medium of communication, an inductive approach to language study, in contrast to a formal approach which is more deductive. The original language citations, of which there are many, are presented in transliterated Hebrew with accompanying abbreviations designating the syntax of the clause, literal interlinear translations into English, and a more flowing, idiomatic English translation. Linguists will find the work valuable, though the lay reader, and even most specialist biblical scholars will value the work, but probably only after it has been divested of technical jargon. This kind of primary research and analysis is vital, but so is its 'translation' into a form usable to others outside the field of technical linguistics. For technical libraries.

E. While studies of the verbal rhetoric have been appearing for some time, analyses of non-verbal rhetoric, such as that undertaken by Kelvin G.

Friebel, are much rarer.<sup>11</sup> His is a revised 1989 PhD thesis completed under Michael Fox at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. The author's choice of Jeremiah and Ezekiel is good, since there are so many sign-acts used in the books. He asks whether the acts were actually performed, or whether they were just a symbolic literary construct, how they communicate, how they fit into rhetorical theory, and how they compared with other, extrabiblical examples of nonverbal communication. He looks at what he reckons is a unique such prophetic act at Mari, as well as numerous non-prophetic acts in the area of the Near East. A further area of exploration which would be fruitful is the iconographic evidence. Since there is much extant material from Mesopotamia during the time when the two prophets were active, a comparison of literary and representational instance of the sign-acts should be mutually illuminating.

F. The minor prophets and their use in the pulpit is the subject of a study by Elizabeth Achtemeier.<sup>12</sup> She is a good choice for writing such a volume due to her academic and practical experience in classroom and pulpit. She recently retired from teaching Bible and homiletics at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. For each prophet, Achtemeier lists 2-3 recommended commentaries, usually including her own, brief historical and theological overviews. She then has several selected passages for which she provides comment regarding their place in the lectionary reading cycle, features to note in the text, and possibilities for preaching. It is a well thought out volume, though each reader would probably think other texts should have been highlighted. Also, it will seem too sparse to most readers, which could also be a goal for the book, to drive the reader back to the text and to the study in order to delve even further into the major themes and truths held in these 'minor' prophets.

G. A different kind of study was undertaken by Else Holt for her doctoral research at the University of Aarhus in Denmark.<sup>13</sup> Due to the tardiness of this review, and the short print runs of such works, it is unfortunately already out of print. The volume is a revision of a thesis finished in 1990 under Knud Jeppesen at the University of Aarhus in Denmark. Its purpose is 'to make a traditio-historical examination of the traditions about Israel's past as they appear in the book of Hosea: what is their background, and how does Hosea use them?' (14). She is thus asking a literary question rather than a historical one. Historical veracity is not a prerequisite of literary use- they are two different categories. She does make the refreshing observation, however, that the burden of proof does lie with those denying the authenticity of one passage or another, in contrast to a strictly minimalist approach which can deny anything not externally verifiable.



The two main historical elements Holt explores are Jacob (Hos 12) and Israel as God's covenant elect. Since she does not hold that the final form of the Pentateuch yet existed until later, she feels that Hosea worked with more fluid traditions in his reinterpretation of the character of Jacob. She determines the following scenario: Hosea uses and interprets traditions known to him; editors (his disciples?) gather these traditions; these editors place them in a framework of exhortation to Judah, showing the nation's history in a positive light and urging the new hearers to learn from it. She also shows that Hosea's discussion of the elect people of the covenant is also based on historical traditions. As part of this study she includes a comparison of the cult of Yahweh with that of Baal, and a study of the word *sidq*.

Holt's work is an important reminder of the separation between historical veracity of statements made in a work and a study of the composition of a work. From a more 'maximalist' position, I would like the affirmation of the former along with a study of the latter, but they are separate issues. The book is suitable for academic collections.

H. The changing person and role of the prophets is the subject of the revised doctoral research which William Schniedewind undertook at Brandeis University.<sup>14</sup> The author traces the shift between the prophet who received and delivered the living 'word of God' during the pre-exilic period to the post-exilic prophet who was charged with receiving and interpreting the word. They moved from oracle to hermeneut. While Schniedewind does not note them, there seem to be parallels to the same shift with the scribes, who also were originally channels of divine revelation but took upon themselves the interpretative role. It is the latter which is condemned in the NT, since they seemed to have held their interpretations to be on a similar level of authority as that of the original divine revelation. His approach is to start with the portrait of prophecy reflected by the Chronicler, whose post-exilic viewpoint upon pre-exilic prophecy proves enlightening.

Schniedewind opens with a detailed analysis of titles used of the prophets, and the inspiration formulae (e.g. 'Thus said the Lord') which they used. Based on these elements, he groups prophetic speeches in order to determine the roles of the prophets and their words. It is here he sees the movement toward inspired interpreter of traditional texts, a role similar to that suggested above by Williamson for the author of Deutero-Isaiah. There are chapters looking at the levitical singers (1 Chron 25:1-6) and their role as 'teaching priests' as relates to the concept of inspiration (concluding that their music was inspired, according to the Chronicler, but that they were not prophets), the relationship between the king, especially David, and prophecy,

and the prophets as historians in their acknowledged use of sources.

The volume is well-written and accessible. It uses unvocalized and untransliterated Hebrew, but translations allow the non-Hebraist access to the discussion. The work will need to be consulted for all those interested in prophecy and the history of the religion of Israel.

I. Larry McQueen published a Pentecostal interpretation of Joel in 1995.<sup>15</sup> He seeks to set the classical Pentecostal text of Joel 3:1-5 (English, 2:28-32) into its OT context before taking the usual hermeneutical step of looking at it through Acts 2. The author first introduces Pentecostal hermeneutics, with emphases on an experiential pre-understanding, Scripture as living, and the place of the community in interpretation. He then sets out his understanding of Joel as a literary unity composed in the early fifth century BC.

One chapter looks to Joel's literary structure and the place in it of the promise of the Spirit's outpouring. It then notes the varied genres of lament, salvation, and judgment, and themes of the day of the Lord and Zion. It then looks at the Spirit promise in light and context of these elements. A second chapter looks at the themes of Joel, particularly that of the Spirit, in the NT (Luke-Acts, Paul, John, Hebrews and Peter). McQueen then traces the use of these themes through the history of Pentecostalism up to the mid-1990's. The book is a useful exercise in textual analysis from one denominational perspective, a task which has many applications for different texts as well as different traditions. The volume will be of interest to Pentecostals, those interested in hermeneutics, and students of both Joel and the Holy Spirit.

J. Richard Schultz explored to important topic of the use of verbal parallels (or quotations) in the prophets in a revision of his 1989 Yale thesis.<sup>16</sup> There are so many apparent quotes in the corpus, and there has never been an adequate method developed to study them, so this is an important endeavor. Following good thesis form, Schultz starts by looking at the history of research. He points out various issues which make the problem especially difficult: dating, textual transmission, prophetic 'schools,' the growth of exegesis, the text and its 'authority,' and canon. In order to develop his own methodology, Schultz looks at 4 non-prophetic literatures: ancient Near Eastern early Jewish, proverbial sayings and others quotations in the OT, and western literature.

Schultz sets out his own method as having three elements: the use of both verbal and syntactic correspondence in order to first identify a quotation, a combination of synchronic and diachronic analysis looking to both historical and literary contexts, and an awareness that a quotation can have varied functions. As a test of his method, Schultz analyses 5 passages from Isaiah

which are either quoted in Isaiah or in other prophetic books. The book is foundational for future study of the OT prophets, and even beyond, since parallels exist beyond their boundaries. The volume needs to be in all theological libraries.

## Commentaries

### The Twelve

A. A recently inaugurated series, "Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative & Poetry" recently released a two volume work on the Minor Prophets.<sup>17</sup> Sweeney opens with a currently 'hot' topic, the formation of the 12, ably surveying suggestions that it came into being diachronically, over a lengthy time period, or synchronically, all in one period. He admits the importance of the question, but his commentary format proscribes detailed and definitive analysis. Each book is given a lengthy treatment in the commentary proper. This consists of: an overview discussing canonical location, historical background, themes, critical and theological issues; the commentary proper, and a section of further readings, both other commentaries and more detailed studies.

Accessibility to a wide range of readers is kept in mind through transliteration of Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic. All should benefit from the careful, readable presentation of suggested interpretations. Sweeney keeps his eye firmly on the OT, not showing interest in latter development of interpretation or use in the NT or the contemporary church. An element of this serviceable set which will distinguish it from many such is its discussion of the interpretational ramifications of the canonical setting of the various books.

B. While not technically a commentary series, an addition to the "Westminster Bible Companion" should be made here.<sup>18</sup> Brown very briefly seeks "to explain the biblical book in its original historical context and explore its significance for faithful living today" (back cover). Aimed at lay readers, it very briefly introduces each book, provides each section of the text in the NRSV, and comments on each section, looking at motifs and themes within the section and their development elsewhere. This is a useful starting point for those wishing to encounter the prophets for the first time, but most will soon want to delve deeper into some of the riches which are available. This volume, and the series, could find a place in church and academic libraries

C. The series "The Forms of the Old Testament Literature" is also not technically a commentary, but rather an introduction to the form critical study



of each biblical book. The first on the minor prophets appeared in 2000.<sup>19</sup> While not a complete commentary, students of the text will find useful information on Nahum through Malachi. Each prophetic book starts with a bibliography covering the entire book, a structural outline and discussion of the content of entire book, as well as discussions of genre, historical and literary setting, and intention, with another briefer bibliography concerning these latter matters. Smaller sections are also analyzed from each of these perspectives, as well as a look at text criticism. The book concludes with a well-annotated glossary of genres and formulas.

There is no actual exegesis or application. The series should be in all academic theological libraries, but most preachers and church teachers would find other resources much more productive for their needs.

## Hosea

Two commentaries have recently appeared from T&T Clark in Edinburgh, and show well the British excellence in exegetical work.<sup>20</sup> One, an addition to the International Critical Commentary series, explores Hosea.<sup>21</sup> In it A.A. Macintosh of St John's College, University of Cambridge, provides a careful and extremely detailed analysis of this important prophecy, concentrating especially upon text critical issues, which is one of the strengths of the series. The introduction, covering almost one hundred pages, spends thirteen of these on text critical sources. Comment on these is also included in the discussion of every passage in the commentary itself.

The series itself started almost a hundred years ago, but only produced volumes on some the biblical books. The last few years have seen its rebirth, with some of the gaps being filled, and replacements written for previous volumes. In the Old Testament series, Jeremiah has been covered in two volumes by William McKane.<sup>22</sup>

The volume starts with a brief overview of the book's contents, and an extensive bibliography of twenty-seven pages. An introduction covers canonical location, language (reflecting the northern prophet's own idiolect), form and style, composition (a literary work, transmitted and effected by Judean redactors), historical background (reflecting the period 750-720 BC), Hosea's thought/theology, and has a time-table of the period.

The commentary proper consists of the author's own translation of a verse at a time. Notes on the translation, generally Hebrew usage and grammar, uses untransliterated and untranslated Hebrew. The following comment section is more accessible, however, using transliteration and translation. The comment is sensible and thorough in matters linguistic and historical, though those seeking theological application will need to look elsewhere. Each section

concludes with the evidence from other texts and versions.

This is an excellent and useful representative of this kind of technical commentary. While mainly directed toward the scholarly community, interested students and pastors will also find material of use, even though this would not be the first commentary on the book to which they would most naturally refer. The price will most probably limit its use in other than libraries, but all serious seminaries and Bible colleges should have it, and the entire series.

## Joel

A. A resuscitation of the venerable "New Century Commentary" is being undertaken by Sheffield Academic Press. A new volume on the series is on Joel and Amos by Richard Coggins, formerly of King's College, London.<sup>23</sup> Coggins begins by discussing the concept of 'the twelve,' and then briefly explores issues of dating. He proposes that both the prophecies were only brought together in the second century BC, though some of their elements may have circulated earlier, even, for Amos 'possibly from a time when Israel had its own king' (7). For each prophet there is a specific introduction concerning issues of date, authorship, unity, genre, etc., followed by the commentary proper. It proceeds verse by verse expounding on matters historical, textual, lexical, and literary. Any Hebrew used is in transliteration so all should find it usable. For those seeking a competent, mainline approach to these two books in a manageable size, Coggins will serve well.

B. A more theological and applicational approach from an evangelical perspective is provided by David Prior in "The Bible Speaks Today" series.<sup>24</sup> The series sets itself the task of falling between the sermon (contemporary and accessible but light on exegesis) and the commentary (exegetical but without an eye to practicality and readability). It well fills a needed niche, while not denying the critical importance of both of the other genres. While not a traditional commentary, Prior does keep one eye firmly on the 'first horizon' of the biblical text, seeking to determine, as far as possible, date, author and setting. He also keeps his other eye on the 'second horizon' of contemporary application. He is quite comfortable looking to the NT in a much fuller way than most OT commentators, and also few there are who refer to *Schindler's List* and UNICEF figures on atrocities to children in Rwanda. Preacher and teacher will greatly appreciate Prior's efforts, and it should serve as a reminder to even the most serious scholar that there should be at least some practical relevance to even the most esoteric of study. These prophets do indeed have much to say to us in our own lives of uncertainty and atrocity.

### Amos

A new edition of a commentary by Gary Smith, professor of OT at Midwestern Baptist Seminary in Kansas City.<sup>25</sup> This edition brings the bibliography up to date, and incorporates it more fully into the discussion by greatly expanding the number of footnotes, especially in the introduction. Smith does an excellent job in interpreting this very important book against its historical, geographical and religious background. Pastors and students would be well served in having this as a primary resource for studying the book, and it would find a useful place in seminary, college, and even some church libraries. The new publishers are to be commended, as are the original publishers, for establishing such an occasional series for commentaries of excellence which have not been commissioned for some established, ongoing series.

### Jonah

The Anchor Bible series provides biblical commentary from across the theological spectrum, from conservative to liberal, Protestant, Jew and Catholic. Jonah, belatedly noted here, appeared in 1990 from the pen of the department chair in religion at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.<sup>26</sup> He, as one with interest in the language and history of Mesopotamia, is a good choice for this prophet. He views the book as a composite with unifying features. As regards dating, he surveys 4 different kinds of evidence which have been brought to bear, coming tentatively down to a post-exilic date. He also has brief sections on the use of Jonah in Jewish and Christian liturgy. Sasson sprinkles the commentary with special discussions of such matters as ancient storms, animals in narratives, and Hebrew poetry. He then concludes the body of the book with a discussions of genre or literary classification, and also of Hebrew narrative art, very useful questions to ask of all writing, but particularly of Jonah.

The book contains much transliterated Hebrew, not all with proximate translation, some will find it heavy going. There is much here to justify the care and diligence needed in reading, so this book should not be ignored by any interested in Jonah. It, and the its series, needs to be in every serious theological library.

### Micah

Also from Britain is the commentary on Micah by William McKane, Scottish emeritus professor at St Andrew's University.<sup>27</sup> The volume seems to be self-standing, not part of a series, even though the publisher is home for the esteemed "International Critical Commentary" series. It is an odd book, starting



in without preamble on suggested textual additions. The author states his compositional thesis to be "that only Micah 1-3... is to be assigned to the eighth century prophet Micah, that the book of Micah bridges the centuries and that its history spans the pre-exilic, the exilic and the post-exilic periods" (7). He suggests a redaction history for the collection, and gives it several different *Sitze-im-Leben*, from the original 8<sup>th</sup> century prophecies to their use by exilic and post-exilic writers as a source for liturgical laments at the fall of the nation.

The commentary proper is accessible mainly to scholars, since Hebrew and Greek scripts are used, as are untranslated foreign quotes. The work is especially strong on text criticism, one of the special interests of the author, as well as the history of interpretation. Specialist libraries will find a place for this volume.

An established team of commentators, Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, have co-authored the Anchor Bible Commentary on Micah.<sup>28</sup> Like their other joint works (commentaries on Hosea and Amos in the same series) it is thorough and exhaustive in its coverage. This is illustrated by its 12 page index of authors cited, and its 67 page bibliography which, while claiming not to be exhaustive, is a goldmine of resources for those studying the book.

The frontal material includes a time line of kings and events from the period reflected in Micah (mid-eighth to late sixth centuries BC), a synoptic date chart of five kings (Uzziah/Azariah, Jeroboam, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah) mentioned by 4 prophets (Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah) as determined by 7 contemporary experts on the time period, and two maps. The introduction proper looks at text, canonical placement, contents of the constituent parts of the book, the traditional divisions of the book as found in early manuscripts in Greek and Hebrew, the book's organization, previous studies and research methodologies, the relationship between Micah and Jeremiah (which share numerous items of vocabulary and theme), the book's literary integrity ("the book as a whole shows some signs of overall integration," 27), and scribal transmission.

The commentary itself is exhaustive in matters linguistic, historical, sociological, and philological. Poetics is also an interest of both authors, so it receives attention as well. Hebrew is almost always transliterated, as is Greek, usually with a translation close enough to allow even non-linguists to follow the argument, though some of the linguistic points themselves are esoteric enough to be beyond most lay readers. One of the strengths of the authors is placing the interpretation of the text within the context of the history of scholarship, so their references to others are numerous. This volume, and the series to which it belongs, needs to be in every serious biblical studies library.

## Nahum

The *Historical Commentary on the Old Testament* is a good series, judging by the previous volume reviewed in this journal,<sup>29</sup> and the volume on Nahum does honor to the series.<sup>30</sup> The author teaches at the Theological University in Kampen and at the Free University in Amsterdam, continuing the Dutch tradition of the preceding volume and of the series editors. The series projections show wider scope than this, with a wide range of recognized scholars taking part. The author takes Nahum to be a pseudonym of a writer in Jerusalem about 660 BC, using earlier writings of Isaiah and the Psalms as well as Mesopotamian literature. Based on strophic analysis, he sees the entire book as 'a well-structured unity' (5). Spronk looks briefly at the book's theological context and the history of its interpretation before moving to the commentary proper.

The latter contains the author's translation, a section entitled 'essentials and perspectives' which discusses genre, historical setting, and theology. The 'scholarly exposition' which follows includes a bibliography with a history of exegesis and the author's own exegesis proceeding from canto (e.g. 1:1-11) through canticle (e.g. 1:1-3a) through strophe (e.g. 1:1) to word. Individual Hebrew words and phrases are given in Hebrew script which is usually unvocalized and untransliterated, so some of the argument will be beyond those without some linguistic fluency. The volume is especially strong in literary and philological material, though all with a serious interest in Nahum will need to consult it.

## Habakkuk

Francis I. Andersen also recently published an Anchor Bible commentary on Habakkuk (see Micah above).<sup>31</sup> It follows the form of the series, and exhibits the same strengths as have already been mentioned. He does provide useful excursions on aspects of Hebrew poetry, including its language, use of verbs, chiasmus, scansion, and items which occur once in a passage but have double-duty grammatical functions, as well as a useful look at the categories of grammatical gender, specifically as it relates to *ruahi*, 'wind, spirit.' This volume is necessary for all serious students of Habakkuk.

## Zephaniah

Another Anchor Bible volume has recently been published by Adele Berlin, who teaches Hebrew Bible and ancient Near Eastern literature at the University of Maryland, College Park.<sup>32</sup> Her contribution is much more modest in scope than other of this series mentioned here. In addition to the usual format of the series, she is cognizant of, and cites from, Jewish commentary on the

book. She also has useful sections on intertextuality, author and date (an implied or fictive author to whom the book was ascribed in the post-monarchy period) and historical setting (the 7<sup>th</sup> century reign of Josiah). She does helpfully point out that those who date the author and events as portrayed in the text itself do not have to ask the same questions as those who put post-exilic words into a pre-exilic setting. The comments are useful, though their relative brevity (covering less than 90 pages) might lead some to other commentators for a fuller treatment, or they might be seen as a refreshing breeze after going through all of the detail of some of the previously mentioned works.

### Zechariah and Malachi

The well-established, mainline commentary series 'The Old Testament Library,' is represented by a volume covering Zechariah 9-14 and Malachi written by David Petersen, professor at Iliff School of Theology in Denver.<sup>33</sup> It concludes a work published in its first part over a decade ago, and represents the more liberal end of the theological spectrum.<sup>34</sup> The latter does not come through too strongly here, since on any reckoning, the prophecies are relatively late. Petersen dates them to the Persian period (late sixth-early fifth centuries BC). He does a very good job in providing a historical, religious and social picture of that period, drawing on recent scholarship based on textual and artifactual resources. He brings out such points as the multiple Yahweh temples of the period, indicating that God was worshiped in places other than the Jerusalem Temple. There also seems to be evidence of religious syncretism at these shrines as well.

Petersen also analyzes the literary structure and form of the prophecies. He sees Zechariah 9-14 as a separate work than 1-8, consisting of a collection of 'originally diverse material.' Malachi he sees as an example of the diatribe genre, similar to a dialogue, using only the words of one party, with quotes from the other party. The analysis helps in understanding the book.

Following his own translation with notes on textual and grammatical matters, Petersen presents an interpretation of the text itself. Hebrew is transliterated and usually also translated. The commentary is a good look at the book as it fits into the Old Testament, with generous citations of illustrative OT passages. Those who look for comment on later, New Testament referents will be disappointed, however. All academic biblical studies libraries should have this book, and it will repay consultation by those interested in these two passages.

From a completely different theological tradition comes the Malachi volume in the Anchor Bible by Andrew E. Hill, who teaches at Wheaton College.<sup>35</sup> It is good to see increasing evangelical involvement in such high-



profile commentary series. His preliminary material is much lengthier than is regular, with a useful glossary and extended discussions of literary (authorship, unity, genre, structure, form, literary features [with 25 different ones identified], message, and theology) and historical aspects relevant to the book, dating the prophetic oracles (near 500 BC; the discussion is supplemented by an appendix indicating the range of 7 different dating positions held by some 75 scholars), Malachi in the NT and in subsequent liturgy. Hill also includes very useful appendixes on: an analysis of the postexilic prophets based on a typological linguistic model initially developed by Robert Polzin and refined by Hill, a discussion of intertextuality or textual interrelationships between Malachi and other books, and the vocabulary of Malachi. This especially rich literary analysis, accompanied by good historical and linguistics analysis, makes it a worthy addition to this series, and a necessity in all theological libraries.

#### Endnotes

1. For a more detailed overview of the state of play of prophetic studies over the last quarter century, see David W. Baker, "Pondering the Prophets," in *The Face of Old Testament Studies*, ed. David W. Baker and Bill T. Arnold. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House/Leicester: Apollos, 1999, 266-294.
2. E. W. Heaton, *A Short Introduction to the Old Testament*. Oxford/Rockport, MA, 1977, 1996. xi + 202 pp., paper, \$13.99.
3. *Mysterious Messengers: A Course on Hebrew Prophecy from Amos Onwards*. London: SPCK, 1997/ Grand Rapids and Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1998. 214 pp., paper, \$18.00.
4. John H. Sailhamer, *Biblical Prophecy*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998. 93 pp., paper, \$6.99.
5. Ronald E. Clements, *Old Testament Prophecy: From Oracle to Canon*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996. x + 278 pp. hardcover, \$29.00. The introduction is found on pp. 1-19.
6. Uriel Simon, *Reading Prophetic Narratives*, trans. Lenn J. Schramm. Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997. xx + 363 pp, hardcover, \$49.95.

Old Testament Prophecy Recent Publications

7. Yehoshua Gitay, ed., *Prohecy and Prophets: The Diversity of Contemporary Issues in Scholarship*. Semeia Studies. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997. viii + 174 pp., paper, \$24.95.
8. J. van Ruiten and M. Vervenne, ed., *Studies in the Book of Isaiah: Festschrift Willem A.M. Beuken*. Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium CXXXII; Leuven: University Press/Peeters, 1997. xx + 540 + 7 pp., paper, np.
9. H.G.M. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah's Role in Composition and Redaction* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), xviii + 306 pp., cloth, \$65.00.
10. Michael Rosenbaum, *Word-Order Variation in Isaiah 40-55: A Functional Perspective*. Studia Semitica Neerlandica; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1997. xii + 259 pp., paper, \$63.00.
11. Kelvin G. Friebel, *Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's Sign Acts: Rhetorical Nonverbal Communication*. JSOTSup 283. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999. 535 pp., cloth, \$95.00.
12. Elizabeth Achtemeier, *Preaching from the Minor Prophets*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. xii + 143 pp., paper, \$14.00.
13. Else Kragelund Holt, *Prophesying the Past: The Use of Israel's History in the Book of Hosea*. JSOTS 194; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995. 160 pp., cloth, \$41.00.
14. William M. Schniedewind, *The Word of the Lord in Transition: From Prophet to Exegete in the Second Temple Period*. JSOTS 197; Sheffield Academic Press, 1995. 275 pp., cloth, \$41.00.
15. Larry R. McQueen, *Joel and The Spirit: The Cry of a Prophetic Hermeneut*. Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series 8. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995. 125 pp., paper, \$14.95.
16. Richard L. Schultz, *The Search for Quotations: Verbal Parallels in the Prophets*. JSOTSup 180. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999. 395 pp., cloth, \$88.00.

17. Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000. xlii + 802 pp., cloth, \$89.90.
18. William P. Brown, *Obadiah through Malachi*. WBC. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996. xii + 209 pp, paper, \$17.00.
19. Michael H. Floyd, *The Minor Prophets*, Part 2. FOTL XXII. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000. xviii + 651 pp., paper, \$49.00.
20. The second is McKane's work on Micah discussed below.
21. A.A. Macintosh, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary of Hosea*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997. xcix + 600 pp., cloth, \$69.95.
22. W. McKane, *Jeremiah*, 2 vol. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986, 1996.
23. Richard James Coggins, *Joel and Amos*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000. xii + 170 pp., paper, \$14.95.
24. David Prior, *The Message of Joel, Micah & Habakkuk: Listening to the Voice of God*. Leicester/Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1998. 279 pp., paper, \$14.99.
25. Gary V. Smith, *Amos*, A Mentor Commentary. Gaenies House, Fearn, Ross-shire IV20 1TW, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 1998; originally Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989. 398 pp., hardcover, \$29.99.
26. Jack M. Sasson, *Jonah: A New Translation with Introduction, Commentary, and Interpretation*. AB 24B; New York: Doubleday, 1990. xvi + 368 pp, cloth, \$32.50.
27. William McKane, *The Book of Micah: Introduction and Commentary*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998. xiv + 242 pp., cloth, \$49.95.
28. Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Micah: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. The Anchor Bible 24E. New York: Doubleday, 2000. xxv + 637 pp., cloth, \$42.50.
29. Cornelis Houtman, *Exodus I*. HCOT; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1993, reviewed in *ATJ* XXVIII (1996) 100 .



Old Testament Prophecy Recent Publications

30. Klaas Spronk, *Nahum*. HCOT; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1997. xxii + 153 pp., paper, np .
31. Francis I. Andersen, *Habakkuk: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. The Anchor Bible 25. New York: Doubleday, 2001. xxii + 387 pp., cloth, \$45.00.
32. Adele Berlin, *Zephaniah: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 25A; New York: Doubleday, 1994. xxii + 165 pp., cloth, \$29.00.
33. David L. Petersen, *Zechariah 9-14 and Malachi*. OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995. xxii + 233 pp., cloth, \$29.00.
34. David L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8: A Commentary*. OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984.
35. Andrew E. Hill, *Malachi: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 25D; New York: Doubleday, 1998. xlv + 436 pp., cloth, \$37.95.

## The Best of the Best on Spiritual Formation: A Review Article

by Jerry R. Flora\*

Aiden Wilson (A.W.) Tozer captured the minds and hearts of many Christians in the last generation. As pastor, editor, and author he produced substance and style that sounded prophetic. His pen seemed to be dipped first in fire, then in ice, as he both scalded the North American church and plumbed the depths of God's reality. His books *The Pursuit of God* (1949) and *The Knowledge of the Holy* (1961) quickly gained attention as near-classic in their dimensions.

Although Tozer had little formal education, wide reading and prayerful living prepared him for his task. At one point he drew up a list of books for those who want to explore "the deep things of God" (Snyder 1991, 231). But the list contains a shock. Among the 35 titles only seven come from Protestant writers. Apparently this leader who described himself alternately as an evangelical and a fundamentalist found 80% of his spiritual nurture in books written by Catholics.

As the twentieth century dashed to its finish-line, matters began to change. An explosion of publishing occurred in the area of spirituality and spiritual formation. The playing field broadened to include spiritualities of various religions, revival of old paganisms, and the so-called New Age spirituality. Along with this came a renewal of interest in the best of Christian literature, the goal of A. W. Tozer's quest.

New anthologies of devotional literature arrived on the scene in the 1990s, each of them trying to convey something of the richness of Christian spiritual writing. In this article I want to review several of these collections and offer a few recommendations among them. The bibliography at the close will give complete publication data for your further exploration.

### 1

Richard Foster has been a leader in Christian spiritual formation ever since his first book, *Celebration of Discipline*, appeared in 1978. Other distinguished publications have followed, climaxed by *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home* (1992) and *Streams of Living Water: Celebrating the Great Traditions of Christian Faith* (1998). Foster's writings always show

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depth of commitment, breadth of awareness, gentleness of spirit, and a striving for balance. Working alongside through much of the writing has been his friend and associate, James Bryan Smith.

Early in the 'nineties the two men collaborated to produce *Devotional Classics: Selected Readings for Individuals and Groups* (1993). This anthology introduces 52 great writers of the Christian church from its beginnings to the present. The selections were originally 4-page study and discussion tools for use in small-group settings. Each contains an introduction to the author, excerpts from his or her writings (printed in two-column format), a Bible selection relevant to the theme of the excerpt, reflection questions, suggested exercises, and concluding personal thoughts by Dr. Foster. The material has found ready acceptance in many quarters, thanks to the respect in which Foster is held and its flexible, user-friendly approach.

The book is a chunky paperback (approximately 7.5 x 9.25 inches) of 353 pages (including three indexes), organized topically. After a section on "Preparing for the Spiritual Life" (eight writers) it introduces five "great streams" of Christian tradition: the prayer-filled life (contemplative), the virtuous life (holiness), the Spirit-empowered life (charismatic), the compassionate life (social justice), and the Word-centered life (evangelical spirituality). Since its publication, Foster has concluded that there is a sixth "stream" of Christian tradition, the sacramental life (incarnational).

The book's greatest strength is this topical arrangement, along with the clear language used throughout and the inclusion of selections from Scripture. The format allows readers to explore up to a dozen writers in one stream of tradition. Of the 52 authors, all but four come from the western church, both Catholic and Protestant (rather evenly divided). The exceptions are Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom from the ancient East and, more recently, Sundar Singh of India and China's Watchman Nee, both of whom were heavily influenced by English writers. Given the history of Christianity, women will always be under-represented in such collections, but thankfully there is a good handful here.

The book's greatest weakness is the obverse of its strength. How does one pigeon-hole a writer? John Wesley, for example, could fit in all the five categories proposed above. Foster admits this but feels the value to be gained is worth the risk. A few dates might be questioned, especially the birthdate of the book's first writer. C. S. Lewis was born in 1898, not 1900. The date of Sundar Singh's mysterious death is given as possibly 1933, but he disappeared in 1929, never to be seen again (Foster and Smith, 1993, 313). Apart from such quibbles, this is an excellent, clear, balanced introduction to great (mostly western) devotional writers topically presented. It was produced as a resource for both individual and group use, and it meets that goal. (A similar volume,



*Spiritual Classics* (2000), is now available as a complement to *Celebration of Discipline*.)

2

Robert Llewelyn is an Anglican priest noted as warden of The Julian Shrine at All Hallows Church, Norwich, England. This small chapel is built on the site of the cell where, in the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries, Julian of Norwich lived and prayed. An anchoress (a solitary intercessor and spiritual director), Julian is the first known woman to write a book in English. *Revelations of Divine Love* is its traditional title, but Julian called her visions merely *Showings*. She has gained a large following in the past generation for reasons which we cannot explore here. In 1980 Llewelyn edited a much-abridged version of her book under the title *Enfolded in Love* (England) or *Daily Readings with Julian of Norwich* (USA). This began a whole series of small devotional anthologies introducing classic writers to the reading public. He then collected many of those into *The Joy of the Saints: Spiritual Readings throughout the Year* (1988).

This paperback of 374 pages offers meaty introductory material by Llewelyn, one-page readings for every day of the year, brief biographical notes on the writers, and an author index. Like the pocket-size books of which it is composed, *The Joy of the Saints* is visually inviting, with ample margins and occasional small drawings. The readings follow no discernible pattern nor are all those by any author grouped together. Rather, the reader experiences through the year a significant one-page selection for each day prepared by some great Christian writer of the past. The 4<sup>th</sup>-century desert fathers are the earliest, and the latest is Therese of Lisieux (d. 1897).

One might expect that Llewelyn's connection with Julian and the Julian Shrine would dispose him to prefer her writing above all others, and that is indeed the case. Following at some distance are Francis de Sales, Augustine, William Law, Martin Luther, John of the Cross, and John Wesley in that order, plus seven others. Aside from the desert fathers and Isaac of Syria, all represent the western church. Males predominate, but Julian of Norwich, Margery Kempe, Teresa of Avila, and Therese of Lisieux offer feminine voices. Since no writers are later than the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it is important that they be presented in clear, contemporary English, and that is happily so. The book's strength is its invitation to encounter a smaller number of authors in greater depth than Foster and Smith can offer, together with its arrangement in daily readings (as brief as four lines but never longer than one page).

*Day by Day with the Early Church Fathers* (1999) is both like and unlike Llewelyn's anthology: Alike in that this too is a book of one-page daily readings in no discernible sequence, followed by biographical notes. Unlike in that the 39 authors here all come from the early church, with no writer later than John of Damascus (d. A.D. 749). The division is about even between East and West, but no women are among them. Augustine appears most often, followed in order by John Chrysostom, Cyprian, and Origen. The compiler-editors are J. Alan Sharrer, Christopher D. Hudson, and Lindsay Vanker, but there is no hint of who they are, what they do, or their qualification for this task.

Two items from the introductory pages help to identify how the book was produced. (1) "The devotional readings in this book have been carefully selected from the 38-volume series *The Early Church Fathers*, first published in 1885. Each ... devotion was edited in a procedure that updated the language yet preserved the original meaning the church father intended" (Sharrer, Hudson, and Vanker 1999, iii). (2) "All Scripture references in this book are taken from the *Holy Bible: King James Version*" (copyright page).

The volume is somewhat narrow in format (approximately 5.5 x 9.25 inches), a hardback of 389 pages. The introduction is a single page, followed by daily readings of one page each. Small medieval woodcuts appear at the top of every page (a different one for each month), then a scripture passage and the text from the early writer, often accompanied by a sidebar highlighting one sentence from that text. The book concludes with biographical notes on the ancient authors (more full than in Llewelyn) and a detailed index of the source for each day's reading. January 1 ("Tears and Joy"), for example, is identified as coming from John Chrysostom's *Homily 6 on Matthew*, paragraph 8.

The strength of this anthology is its focus on writers of the early centuries with an even distribution between West and East. By limiting itself to the King James version of the Bible and the 1885 translation of the church fathers, the book needs no acknowledgment of authors or publishers, nor copyright permission for anything it includes. All is in the public domain, and all is available without permission and without cost, making the publisher's task easier (and cheaper). But readers deserve at least some identification of the editors and more helpful introduction than a mere page.

Another volume of readings from the early church is *Drinking from the Hidden Fountain: A Patristic Breviary. Ancient Wisdom for Today's World* (1993). I find this book to be a visual and tactile pleasure. It is a sewn

paperback with a plasticized cover, good quality paper, and a very handy size (5 x 7 inches). Here are daily readings from about 45 writers grouped so that each month's material follows one theme. May's excerpts, for example, are titled "Come to me, O God, that I may come to you." A meaty prologue precedes the readings, and they are followed by biographical notes, a general index month by month, and an index of sources.

Most of the writers come from the eastern church with John Chrysostom predominating, followed in order by Basil (the Great) of Caesarea and a close race between Maximus the Confessor, Augustine of Hippo, Clement of Alexandria, Defensor Grammaticus, and Cyril of Jerusalem. In addition to Augustine, the West also offers Tertullian, Ambrose, and Boethius. Three authors break out of the early church period: Simeon the New Theologian and Niceta Stethatus from the East and the great western monk, Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153), the latest author to be quoted. The collection includes no female writers.

The editor, Jesuit scholar Thomas Spidlik, first published this anthology in Italian in 1971, then went on to produce *The Spirituality of the Christian East: A Systematic Handbook* (1986). The latter volume displays massive scholarship and must be described as magisterial. Its chapters are stunning in their compression and documentation. The bibliography runs to more than 50 pages, citing works in a half-dozen languages. Thus when Spidlik edits *Drinking from the Hidden Fountain* and identifies the ancient source for each of its readings, one can infer that he himself translated everything in the book before Paul Drake rendered it into English.

This is indeed "a patristic breviary," a prayerbook mostly from writers of the ancient church. The selections invite the reader to linger, pray, and incorporate their wisdom into daily living. Its handy size and meticulous scholarship make it doubly attractive to anyone serious about encountering the best from the eastern church's first millennium.

5

*Near to the Heart of God: Daily Readings from the Spiritual Classics* (1998) is the most extensive of the anthologies considered thus far, if that means the number of writers who are included. Foster and Smith have 52, but this book has 60 (not counting "anonymous"). Here are readings for every day of the year, each of them titled and preceded by a short biblical passage, then followed by a suggested personal response. The book concludes with 18 pages



of biographical notes and index, recommended additional reading, and indexes of scriptures and topics.

The editor, Bernard Bangley, is a Presbyterian pastor and author of several books centered on outstanding devotional writers. In a warm, personal introduction he describes his procedure: "What I have done is to paraphrase their writings into clear, simple, modern English.... I have not put any words into their mouths.... The metaphors, examples, and illustrative comments in this book are in the original material.... I have resisted every temptation to introduce new elements. They aren't needed. These pages were lively when they were first written and remain lively today" (Bangley 1998, vii-viii).

The book achieves this goal. It is a pleasure to read, often surprisingly contemporary. Bangley's favorite among the five dozen writers is Francis de Sales followed in order by Thomas a Kempis, Guigo I, and Teresa of Avila. Although these are all Roman Catholic, about half the writers are Protestants, while four come from the Orthodox church (John Cassian, Evagrius Ponticus, Pseudo-Macarius, and the author of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century *Pilgrim's Tale or The Way of a Pilgrim*). Their dates stretch from the late first century (Hermas) to the 19<sup>th</sup> ("the pilgrim"), and eight of the 60 are women. The selection shows some special interest in the British Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

If one wants to begin reading in the greatest Christian devotional writers, this book might be a place to start. Its simple, modern English makes it easy to focus on the substance without getting stuck in outdated style. In fact, Bangley and Harold Shaw Publishers have gone one step further. They have produced a sampler, *Morning and Evening with the Spiritual Classics: 40 Days of Meditations* (1999). Here are 80 selections from the larger volume offered in a slim pocket or purse size (3.5 by 6.25 inches), costing only \$2.99. This is an ideal place to start. From it one can graduate to the larger volume and on to the others reviewed here.

6

Finally, we may consider a different kind of collection, one arranged in chronological sequence. *Invitation to Christian Spirituality: An Ecumenical Anthology* (1999) is the work of John R. Tyson of Houghton College. An acknowledged expert on the life and thought of Charles Wesley, Tyson here collects material from 76 writers in a paperback of 474 pages. The book opens with a 50-page "invitation" in which the editor discusses the nature and themes of Christian devotion. Then begins the march through church history in five periods: the ancient church (21 writers), the medieval era (11 writers), the Reformation era (10 authors), modern spirituality [roughly 1600-1900] (17 authors), and contemporary spirituality [the 20<sup>th</sup> century] (17 writers).

Tyson offers "an ecumenical anthology," but inclusivity remains elusive. The East, for example, disappears after the early church. Even then, the absence of John Chrysostom--possibly the greatest of all eastern fathers--seems egregious. Other notable omissions include John Bunyan (*The Pilgrim's Progress*), George Fox (founder of the Quakers and author of a famous journal), William Law (whose writings influenced the Wesleys and many after them), John Woolman (whose *Journal* details a one-man civil rights movement prior to the American Revolution), and one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's most widely noted authors, Henri Nouwen. On the other hand, we can thank Dr. Tyson for including more women (18) than any other anthology reviewed here. He also offers selections from contemporary writers who need to be noticed; for example, the African American Howard Thurman, Mother Teresa of India, Peru's Gustavo Gutierrez, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa.

Tyson writes a brief introduction to each period of church history and several paragraphs for each person included, then come one or more excerpts from the writings of each author. The book concludes with a detailed general index and a scripture index. It is the most complete of all the collections reviewed here and the only one to move in historical sequence. Those are its strengths. Among weaknesses are the omissions detailed above and the use of older translations for some of the works that are excerpted. If you are looking for a church-historical survey of great devotional writers which is fairly complete, this is the book.

7

In closing, let me briefly mention several works related to those reviewed here. (1) A fine complement to Tyson's anthology is Bradley Holt's *Thirsty for God: A Brief History of Christian Spirituality* (1993). A college professor and former missionary in Africa, Holt offers in 150 pages all a short text should be. He begins by discussing four biblical relationships: with God, ourselves, others, and the earth. Then he traces the history of Christian devotion through the same five periods as Tyson, but using other titles. (He calls the medieval period "the European era," arguing that Christianity, after an explosive missionary start, shrank back into a European enclave within the larger world.) The book includes discussion questions, spiritual formation exercises for each chapter, a timeline, glossary, bibliography, and indexes. This is an ideal short survey, the best of its kind in print.

(2) Another brief guide is *The Inward Pilgrimage: An Introduction to Christian Spiritual Classics* (1996) by Bernhard Christensen. This simply written "introduction," first published in 1976, is again available, this time with a new foreword and questions for reflection/discussion by Bradley Holt. What

Dr. Christensen does is to introduce, describe, and offer short quotations from sixteen devotional classics taken in chronological order. Beginning with Augustine and the desert fathers, they conclude with Evelyn Underhill and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The surprise in the collection may be Brigid Emily Herman's *Creative Prayer*, happily available once more in a new, fresh editing (1998). If you want to put just your toe into the water of devotional classics, then Christensen's book is one to consider. Its only drawback is the appearance in the new edition of some distressing typographical errors.

(3) A good follow-up might be the series called Upper Room Spiritual Classics. These are pocket or purse-size paperbacks of 72 pages, each introducing the work of one devotional master. Beginning in 1998, the Upper Room has released five of these each year. They are available in 5-volume annual sets or in individual volumes (\$4.95 each). These are one of the best buys on the market: a fine introduction, carefully chosen excerpts from each writer's work (in gracefully contemporary inclusive language), and suggestions on how to read for personal and group formation. Hearty thanks to the publishers and the editor, Keith Beasley-Topliffe, for work well done!

(4) *A Practical Guide to Spiritual Reading* (1994) goes beyond excerpts to complete works worth exploring. The author, Susan Annette Muto, possesses encyclopedic knowledge of the church's devotional literature, and her "guide" is a comprehensive handbook. Part I is 50 pages of help for this kind of reading. Part II (150 pages) details three reading programs involving scripture and the literature of spirituality. Part III offers an annotated bibliography that is 75 pages long. In an appendix Dr. Muto sets out "a three-part, twelve-month cycle of readings ... for classroom or home study purposes" (Muto 1994, 303). I know of nothing quite like this compendious volume.

(5) Another unique collection is *Amazing Grace: Hymn Texts for Devotional Use* (1994). Here are the words of more than 200 of our best hymns printed without musical notation as the poems they really are. The editors, Bert Polman, Marilyn Kay Stulken, and James R. Sydnor represent the Christian Reformed, Lutheran, and Presbyterian churches respectively. "This volume is really a home hymnal instead of being a part of the church pew furnishings.... The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada endorsed and recommended the publication of this hymnal" (Polman, Stulken, and Sydnor 1994, viii-ix). Its compact size (4.5 by 6.5 inches), clear layout, and ample indexes make this a valuable companion for devotional use.

(6) Many collections of prayers are on the market, but few can rival *The Oxford Book of Prayer* (1985), edited by Bishop George Appleton of the Church of England. This anthology contains more than a thousand prayers, the great majority from within the Christian faith. In addition to prayers from scripture, there seem to be prayers from all periods and places the church has



existed. The three longest sections organize their material around the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and prayers from other religious traditions. Ample indexes of authors, sources, and subjects round out this excellent volume of 399 pages, available in both cloth and paper bindings. It is a treasure of material for pondering and praying.

Treasures to be admired, wealth to be gained, breadth to be explored, depths to be plumbed—our faith abounds in possibilities of discovery. We owe it to ourselves and our Lord, the church and the world, to discover and utilize the best of the best. As A. W. Tozer is reported to have said, "Life is too short to waste time reading books. You must read only the best." If I were beginning, I would choose Christensen's *The Inward Pilgrimage* together with Bangle's sampler, *Morning and Evening with the Spiritual Classics*. After that, perhaps the Upper Room Spiritual Classics, and the banquet is served. Enjoy the best of the best!

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## BOOK REVIEWS

David Noel Freedman, Allen C. Myers, and Astrid Beck (editors), *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000. 1459 pages. Cloth. \$45.00.

Eerdmans has produced a fine-quality, truly comprehensive one-volume Bible Dictionary. As the editor-in-chief points out in his preface, the genre of "Bible Dictionary" is actually two-fold. The multi-volume "dictionaries" are intended to be encyclopaedic in their coverage of each topic, being at once comprehensive (insofar as they treat most every topic imaginable) and exhaustive (insofar as they go into respectable depth on each topic). This volume should not be seen as competing with such resources (e.g., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* or the *IVP Dictionary of the New Testament*), but rather with similar one-volume resources that are much more restricted in the depth of treatment possible.

Within its class, however, this resource distinguishes itself on a number of fronts. First, it is truly comprehensive. The sheer number of entries (over 5000) alone gives strong evidence of this. One will find entries not only on the canonical books, the apocrypha, major pseudepigrapha, and texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls, but also articles on a broad array of archaeological, historical, theological, and even cultural topics related to the Scriptures and the world in which they took shape. Second, its selection of contributors has, in general, been judicious. Major articles tend to be allocated to world-class scholars who have distinguished themselves in the relevant areas (e.g., James Crenshaw on Psalms, Paul Redditt on Zechariah, Joel Marcus on Mark, Craig Koester on John, Victor Matthews on Kinship, and Sara Mandell on the Hasmoneans). Moreover, the range of contributors reflects in a fair and balanced way the range of scholarship and confession. That is to say, while an individual article will betray an author's bias, the range of biases represented is exceedingly fair. Some of the assignments may not be as optimal as was the case in Freedman's larger dictionary, the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (i.e., fewer of the articles are actually assigned to scholars who have produced significant monographs or articles on the subjects), but, remembering the different goals of the two kinds of dictionary, this does not in the end detract from the value of the present work.

Each article provides an overview of the subject and concludes with several resources for further study. In every case, the user should bear in mind that the multi-volume dictionaries (such as the two mentioned above) will provide fuller treatment and fuller bibliographic suggestions, and so should be consulted next for further study. The more-than-5000 articles written by over 600 contributors are attractively complemented by over a hundred maps and photographs scattered throughout and by sixteen pages of color maps at the back of the volume. For ready-reference (and for value), the *EDB* is a choice resource that I would highly recommend for pastors, students, and lay persons.

David deSilva



## Book Reviews

Ferdinand E. Deist, *The Material Culture of the Bible: An Introduction*, edited by Robert P. Carroll and Philip R. Davies. Biblical Seminar 70. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000. 348 pp., paperback, \$29.95.

This important book has an unfortunate history. The author, Ferdinand Deist, a leading South African Old Testament scholar, died of a heart attack in 1997, before the completion of the volume. The editorial mantle was taken up by the British OT scholar Robert Carroll, who himself died in 2000. The final editorial work was completed by Davies. The material was deemed of sufficient import to bring to a conclusion, even though the concluding syntheses were not complete upon Deist's death.

As the title indicates, the volume sets out to explore Israel's culture, though the title is ironically inappropriate. Deist looks to exegetical and social-scientific approaches to OT study, most particularly anthropology, to help in interpreting the biblical text. What is ignored, however, is the material evidence itself, that is what has been unearthed by archaeologists. For example, in a brief section on the technology of war, he looks to the Bible for categories and terminology of implements and calamities of war, but makes no reference to artifacts or even contemporary illustrations which would add visual impact to his theme, e.g. the scenes of the siege of Lachish from reliefs from Sennacherib's palace. This is an unfortunate lacuna which, while making the book shorter, also makes it less useful.

In the first chapter Deist looks at definitions of 'culture,' and he asks the question whether the biblical text reflects the culture it portrays or a later, post-exilic culture. He argues that, while it might have reached its final form after the exile, it does contain genuine reflections of an earlier period. In the second, technical chapter, Deist explores theories of culture, and in the third he looks at language and meaning. He then moves to less theoretical areas when he explores in turn the environment, the economy, technology, social organization, political organization, and very briefly, the topic of social control, including honor and shame. This is currently a very hot topic, and would undoubtedly have been greatly expanded in the finished work. The volume concludes with a 22 page bibliography and indexes of references, subjects, Hebrew terms, and authors.

In spite of its tragic incompleteness, the volume is a mine of wealth for the biblical exegete, even though the technical nature of the introductory can be heavy reading. For example, the chapter on the economy shows the value of the great linguistic detail into terms for and the societal import of, property, labor, distribution, and consumption. Among other things it shows the great importance played by the cult and its maintenance in the Israelite economy. While the volume will usefully be supplemented by other works by such authors as John Walton and Victor Matthews, and we look forward with anticipation to the soon to be released *Life in Ancient Israel* by Philip King and Lawrence Stager which we hope to review next year. This volume should be in all seminary and specialist libraries.

David W. Baker

F. Brown, S. R. Driver, C. A. Briggs, ed. *The Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*. CR-ROM version. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2000. \$49.95.

Logos is again to be thanked for making important research material available in its Logos Library System format. In this format, searches can be made through all elements of the library, so making it a powerful tool.

The *Lexicon* has a long history in English since its publication by Clarendon Press in Oxford in 1906. This is apart from its earlier incarnations in Latin and German starting in 1833. This form is 'enhanced' in that it has added several referential numbering systems to the 1906 version, including the numbers for *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, *The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (ed. G. A. Archer et al. [Chicago: Moody, 1980]), and those developed by E. W. Goodrick and J. R. Kohlenberger III for *The NIV Exhaustive Concordance* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990). These numbers have been added at the beginning of each word entry. It is unfortunate that the latter number follows the abbreviation "GK," which is a common abbreviation for the venerable Hebrew reference grammar of Gesenius-Kautsch. Another enhancement is the inclusion at the appropriate place in the text of the "Addenda et Corrigenda" taken from the 1951 English corrected edition. The Strong's numbers and corrections had previously been incorporated by Jay Green in his edition of BDB published by Hendrickson in 1979. He also added an index of Strong's numbers, Hebrew forms, and BDB page numbers which students found very useful. For some reason, Hendrickson opted to delete the Hebrew words from this index in their 1996 edition, making the result much less user friendly. This new electronic edition concludes with alphabetized indexes of Hebrew and Aramaic derivative forms, allowing students to be able to smile yet again.

This lexicon is the current tool of choice for most introductory Hebrew courses. While this format is more expensive than either the Hendrickson or Clarendon editions, its ease of use and portability should make it attractive to those who do not have a hard copy. For those who do, suggesting it as an appropriate Christmas or birthday gift would give you something much more useful than another tie. The CD versions should be in every academic biblical studies library which has electronic holdings.

David W. Baker

Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and J.J. Stamm, ed. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament CD-ROM Edition*. Leiden: Brill, 2000. \$399 (individual) – \$999 (institutional site license for up to 25 users).

Brill ([www.brill.nl](http://www.brill.nl)) and Logos Research Systems ([www.logos.com](http://www.logos.com)) are to be commended for their continued vision of making major academic works available in electronic format. This important work, part of the printed version of which was reviewed in an earlier volume of this *Journal* (28 [1996] 150-151), is part of the increasing number of resources accessible using the Logos Library System, which is included on the disk. Minimum system requirements include: a Pentium 60 computer using at least Windows 95 with an SVGA monitor, 25 MB free disk drive space and a 4x CD-ROM. If more space is available, the product can also be downloaded to run

off the computer hard drive rather than the CD. The CD is accompanied by a 26 page 'User's manual.'

This version of *HALOT* is able to function as a stand-alone module, as part of an existing Logos Library, or on a network, and installation instructions are given for each of these options. When used with the Logos Library, it is seamlessly integrated so that searches and other functions can easily include *HALOT* along with the other books. The ease of its use in electronic form makes this a much more usable tool than the 4 volume printed set. The CD also has the distinct advantage of being considerably less expensive than the printed version, which runs approximately \$551. While it is still very expensive for individuals to purchase, serious students of Hebrew and the Bible will need access to *HALOT*. If they don't already have it in printed form, this would be a wise choice. This form should be available in serious academic, seminary, and specialist libraries which have electronic holdings.

David W. Baker

"Hebrew Speaktionary" CDROM by Living Israeli Hebrew (ph. 800-98-5698), \$19.95.

If you have been looking for a simple way to learn everyday Modern Hebrew vocabulary, you should consider this electronic tool. It is simple to use. A plethora of words have been arranged under 29 categories, from animals to directions, time, clothing, food, electronics, Jewish festivals, and more.

To strengthen your fluency in office hardware, for example, click on "Business & Office." A further click on "stapler" within the English wordlist will bring a color photo of a stapler to your monitor. Click on the picture, and a native speaker will say "*shadchan*" in crisp tones. The picture is triple-captioned: English, transliterated Hebrew, and Hebrew script (consonants only, as is typical for Modern Hebrew).

Learners young and old alike will find this tool appealing. It would be useful for classroom use as well as part of a self-study program.

To summarize, Hebrew Speaktionary's strengths are that it is highly visual, it offers wide variety, and it presents authentic pronunciation. Drawbacks? If your goal is to converse in Modern Hebrew, you will need a different tool to learn how to string words together. If your interest is Biblical Hebrew you may be intrigued to discover how many ancient words have been retained in Modern Hebrew (house is still *bayit* today). At the same time you will be hard-pressed to fasten much ancient value to the remaining words in this program (including *shadchan*).

Paul Overland

Sandra Landis Gogel, *A Grammar of Epigraphic Hebrew*. SBL Resources for Biblical Study 23. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998. xx + 522 pages, hardback, \$44.95.

Hebrew is rare among written languages in that the majority of its early written remains are included in only one book, the Old Testament. By word count, there is far more Hebrew material from the period up to the return from the Babylonian exile found inside the Old Testament than there has been found outside it. This is not to say that there is no useful extra-biblical material, which is definitely not the case. The relatively small corpus, the often broken nature of the texts, and the diversity of genre, find spots,



and publication have resulted in only little synthetic study of this material. It is to address this lack that Sandra Gogel wrote this volume.

Gogel states that: "This book provides a grammar of the extra-biblical Hebrew inscriptions of Palestine which have been attributed by various archaeological, historical, and paleographic analyses to the period between the tenth and sixth century B.C. These pre-Persian inscriptions comprise a corpus of epigraphic Hebrew inscriptions (including ostraca, graffiti, and seals) which previously has never been studied comprehensively."

The book begins with a description of the texts mined for grammatical information, starting with the 10<sup>th</sup> century Gezer Calendar through the 6<sup>th</sup> century inscription from Khirbet Beit Lei, a total of 348 inscriptions. There follow chapters on phonology (including a useful, lengthy discussion of *matres lectionis*), morphology, and syntax, as well as a lexicon of almost a hundred pages. A very useful feature for a volume of this type is the inclusion in an appendix of transliterations and English translations of all the relevant texts. This is valuable in that it makes the text self-standing, not necessitating constant searching for the actual texts under discussion. The book concludes with a 28 page bibliography covering material up to 1998.

The volume is very well conceived and executed. It will be used by Semitists, and should be in seminary, academic and specialist libraries, where it will be a standard for years to come.

David W. Baker

Botterweck, G. J., Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, Vol. 9, mārad-nāqâ. Trans. by David E. Green. Grand Rapids, Mi.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998, xxvi + 563 pp.

This volume in the O.T. counterpart to the successful *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* contains a high number of articles on theologically significant terms. The articles on *mishpāt* (justice, judgment), *nhm* (regret, repent, comfort) and *nephesh* (throat, desire, life, self, person), among others, offer especially full treatments of terms that do not always translate easily from Hebrew to English. Following the series format, entries discuss the etymology, semantic field, and particular uses, and where possible, semantic parallels in other ancient Near Eastern languages. The entry on *nābî'* (prophet, prophesy) is an example of how wide the exploration of a term may range. It begins with the assertion that the root is derived from West Semitic (as opposed to a proposed Egyptian etymology) and then proceeds to discuss the origin, use, and derivation of the term in Eblaite, Akkadian, and Ugaritic. (In these and other languages the root seems to denote one who has been called or named.) This is followed by a survey of the phenomenon of prophecy in Mari, Canaan, and Assyria. The wider linguistic and religious context of the root thus established, the discussion then moves, respectively, from the use of the root in Amos, in prophetic narratives before Amos, in prophetic literature from Hosea to the Exile, in exilic prophecy, and in the postexilic period. Reading the article from beginning to end thus not only gives the reader a sense of the term and its usage but also a capsule survey of the development of prophecy in Israel.

## Book Reviews

Students using this work will want to be aware that most of the entries are grounded in German scholarship and generally assume the models of composition and development that are common in that context. Many of the articles are also somewhat dated. (A survey of footnotes and bibliographies yields a preponderance of citations from the 1950's through the 1970's, with infrequent references to literature since then.) However, this is problematic in only a few cases, such as the article on *mishpāhā* (clan), which should be consulted along with more recent work on the kinship system of ancient Israel. The student, therefore, will want to resist the impulse to consider any of the articles as the "last word" and will use this resource along with others for lexical study. As a tool for acquiring a fuller understanding of the semantic world of biblical Hebrew, *TDOT* still has few equals.

L. Daniel Hawk

G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, Heinz-Josef Fabry, ed. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. X. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000. Xxiv + 592 pp, \$48.00. Vol. XI, 2001. Xxiv + 615 pp, \$50.00.

These volumes complement the earlier well-known series on the New Testament (G. Kittel's *TDNT*; English translations, 1964-) in a series which itself started in English translation in 1974. The first volume under review contains 80 articles by 53 contributors, and the second, 83 articles by 53 contributors. They were originally published in German in 1986 and 1987-1988, respectively, so the translation and English publication process has been very slow.

There are numerous articles in both volumes of major theological (e.g., X- 'avenge, revenge,' 'forgive,' 'serve, worship,' 'long time, forever,' 'transgression'; XI- 'help,' 'Most High,' 'hold back,' 'make, do, act,' 'time,' 'redeem,' 'pray, prayer'), ethical (e.g., X- 'loan; practice usury,' 'charge interest,' 'seduce,' 'pledge, loan'; XI- 'poor,' 'stand surety,' 'rich, wealth'), historical (e.g., X- 'Sodom,' 'Sea of Reeds,' 'Sinai,' 'Eden'), and socio-religious (e.g., X- 'Succoth,' 'scribe,' 'ruler, prince,' 'Hebrews'; XI- 'city,' 'burnt offering, sacrifice,' 'young woman [virgin],' 'people,' 'circumcise,' 'Astarte') importance. These volumes, and the series as a whole, deserve a place in any serious theological library. Most pastors and teachers, however, would probably find themselves better served by making the *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. W. van Gemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) their first choice for such a reference work.

David W. Baker

Jerome T. Walsh. *Style & Structure in Biblical Hebrew Narrative*. Collegeville, Min.: The Liturgical Press, 2001

Although there have been many fine studies on the stylistic features of biblical Hebrew narrative, it has remained for the present work to give a comprehensive treatment of the various devices utilized in its structuring operations. Walsh addresses the topic by examining structures of organization, disjunction, and conjunction. Following a brief introduction, he catalogues and describes a range of devices by which

Hebrew narrative organizes units and subunits, sets boundaries that demarcate them, and links them together to achieve continuity.

Symmetry and repetition, the distinctive attributes of classical Hebrew literature, receive the fullest treatment. The author first orients the reader through a description of such operations as symmetry and asymmetry, repeated elements, repetition as an organizing principle, balance between associated subunits, and the interpretative access provided by symmetries. Various types of symmetrical structures are then discussed: reverse symmetries (such as concentric and chiasmic structures, wherein latter elements oppose former ones), forward symmetries (where symmetry is created through simple parallelism), alternating repetition (e.g. an A B A B A structure), partial symmetries (inclusion and epitome), types of symmetries with multiple structures, and instances of asymmetry (wherein a symmetrical pattern is established but disrupted by a significant deviation). Walsh illustrates each of the structures here, as throughout the book, with analyses of multiple textual examples. Part II continues the investigation by identifying structures that mark the boundaries of narrative units. Here Walsh explains how changes in characters, locale, time and narrative voice can signal a new direction in the story, and how repetition of information already known, unnecessary repetition of subject nouns, and unnecessary interruptions of direct speech with "and X said" accomplish the same objective. The section concludes with a discussion of the ways that units can be marked by disruptions of narrative sequence. Part III, the shortest section, moves in a different direction and explores devices that render a continuity between narrative units and subunits. These include various forms of "threads" (significant unifying elements or patterns in one unit that are repeated in a following unit), "links" (non-significant repetitions such as catchwords), and "hinges" (a combination of threaded and linked elements).

One of the first tasks in the exegesis of narrative is the identification of narrative units and the description of the way the units are connected to each other. Students sometimes find this task difficult and often undertake it apart from a sense of Hebrew narrative's distinctive features. This accessible book therefore provides a welcome and important resource and will benefit both students and seasoned interpreters alike.

L. Daniel Hawk

Wilfried Warning, *Literary Artistry in Leviticus*. Biblical Interpretation Series 35. Leiden: Brill, 1999. xv + 256 pp., cloth, EUR 70/ \$82.00.

When one thinks of the book of Leviticus, literary artistry is not usually the first thing that comes to mind. How can a book detailing sacrifices and clean and unclean things be artistic? This slightly revised 1997 thesis from the SDA Theological Seminary seeks to address that issue. In his own words, Warning aims at "ascertaining the structuring significance of terminological patterns and their respective contribution to the overall artistic outline of the extant text" (2).

In his review of previous discussions of levitical structure, Warning makes the pointed observation that the widely varied approaches to biblical studies, and even more, one might add, the diverse outcomes from these approaches, "are most likely indicative of the ineluctable subjectivity inherent in each approach including the present one" (7).



In order to somewhat alleviate the subjectivity, the author's interest is in the present Masoretic Text, not in any putative pre-text. He seeks to see how it, rather than some hypothetical, reconstructed text is structured by its author/editor.

In his overview of present understanding of the priestly writings, Warning classifies approaches into 4 groups, those saying that P is: 1) a multilayered work from the preexilic period; 2) a multilayered work from the exilic/postexilic period; 3) an editorial reworking of previous material and not an independent source at all; 4) originally from the pen of Moses, along with the rest of the Pentateuch. He mentions names of several scholars working within each of these camps. He then looks at some who have specifically worked on aspects of structure, namely Y. Radday, W. H. Shea, M. Douglas, and C. R. Smith. Warning himself takes a rhetorical critical approach to the book, seeing the 37 divine speeches as the elemental building block of the book. He analyzes the speeches' microstructure ('the interrelation of distinct and different parts') and the macrostructure of the text of Leviticus as a whole.

Warning spends one chapter looking at the divine speeches, marked by 'and Yahweh spoke/said to Moses/Aaron.' He points out that the theologically central chapter 17, which details the Day of Atonement, is also central to the structure of the book as he determines it. What he does not do is justify including both the Hebrew verbs 'say' (2 times) and 'speak' (35 times) on the same level as speech indicators, when they numerically seem to not be equal, though he does note ties between the two passages introduced by the first verb.

Through verbal repetition of numerous words, the sevenfold repetition of words and forms, chiasmic structures, and positioning in the seventh or twelfth and second and second-to-last positions, the author seeks to show the purposeful, and thus unifying, structure of the book of Leviticus. Readers will find some examples convincing and some problematic, but the study does indicate that one must take structuring seriously. As Warning notes, the study has implications for an atomistic approach to the composition of the book. Such structuring, if objectively verifiable, leaves problematic any suggestion that the work might be a simple collocation of numerous sources and not a deliberate structure drafted by a skillful author or editor.

While the book is helpful, it is not for the lay reader, since much unvocalized, untransliterated, and usually untranslated Hebrew is used, as would be expected in a scholarly work of this nature. What is not expected is the lack of careful editing, which is unfortunate and troubling, especially for such an expensive book and from a generally careful publisher. The book is published with an added page of 31 errata items. I also note in checking to see if I might be mentioned in the bibliography (a human trait we all engage in!), that there is a typo in that entry, so one wonders how many others there might be in the bibliography and elsewhere which were not caught. While the book should be in serious theological libraries, it should be used with care so that any misprints might not cause undue consternation.

David W. Baker

V. Philips Long, ed. *Israel's Past in Present Research: Essays on Ancient Israelite Historiography*. Sources for Biblical and Theological Study, Volume 7. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1999, xx + 612 pp.

The question of history, as it relates to the testimony of the Old Testament, has rarely been as difficult to address as it is presently. The paucity of external data for key periods of Israel's history, continuing debates over the composition of the texts, and profound disagreements over assumptions and methods have prevented scholars from approaching a consensus on tasks as basic as describing the historiographical impulse in ancient Israel, defining the relationship between the biblical text and archaeological models, or writing a history of Israel. As a result, the scholarly literature is massive both in volume and perplexity. Long, however, has succeeded in editing a superlative anthology that (despite the disclaimers in his preface) gives the reader a comprehensive grasp of the scope of the current discourse as well as the various approaches that configure it.

Long's decision to focus primarily on methodological discussions rather than specific historical studies or issues (e.g. the appearance of Israel in Canaan, the Israelite monarchy) makes this volume particularly useful to those interested in the historical witness of the Old Testament. Long divides the collection into six parts. Each begins with an introduction that orients the reader to the topic addressed within it. Parts 1 and 2 put the discussion of history in context. Part 1 consists of three essays. The first (by John H. Hayes) surveys the study of Israelite and Judean history from the Renaissance to the present, while the latter two (by Mark Brettler and Rolf Rendtorff) address the present lack of consensus amongst biblical historians. The three essays in Part 2 (by William W. Hallo, H. Cazelles, and A. R. Millard) explore biblical historiography within the context of the intellectual climate of ancient Near East.

Parts 3 and 4 are concerned with the multiplex character of history writing in Israel and the methodological challenges it raises. Long groups the essays in Part 3 into three categories. Essays by John J. Collins, John Van Seters, R. N. Whybray, Philip R. Davies, and Gerhard Maier discuss the Old Testament's antiquarian character (i.e. its interest in representing the past). Two more essays, by J. Alberto Soggin and Claus Westermann, explore its aspectual character (i.e. its theological perspective and didactic intent). The section concludes with two essays by Long and L. Alonso Schökel that address the artistic character of biblical historiography. The essays in Part 4 then take up the task of how a history of Israel should be written. Contributions by Diana Edelmann, K. Lawson Younger, Jr., Siegfried Hermann, J. Maxwell Miller, and Ferdinand Deist discuss, respectively, how the Bible and material remains may be assessed and utilized as sources, how we should understand the notion of history and ideology, the importance of exegetical study, the role of the historian's own biases and perspectives, and what models are appropriate to describe the process of historical change. Two additional essays (by Niels Peter Lemche and Baruch Halpern) take widely divergent positions on the role biblical materials ought to play in writing history. The section concludes with essays by John Barton and Herbert H. Klement that examine the impact of literary critical approaches.

Part 5 comprises representative treatments of historical issues. Essays by Roland de Vaux, Thomas L. Thompson, and John Goldingay discuss the thorny issue

of evaluating the historicity of the patriarchal narratives. Richard Hess assesses archaeology's contribution to the early history of Israel in Canaan, while J. G. McConville argues, through a study of major themes, that the Deuteronomistic History preserves authentic historical remembrance. Hans Walter Wolff and Hans-Dieter Neef examine the appropriation of historical traditions in the prophets, and Gary N. Knoppers asserts that, despite their bias, the books of Chronicles are reliable and useful sources for reconstructing Israelite history.

The volume concludes with an essay by the editor that looks forward to future developments and offers proposals for continuing dialogue and refining methods. The essay is necessarily brief but nevertheless provides an informative perspective on where the discipline is headed. In the same spirit I would add a couple of observations. First, we might expect an increasing dialogue between history and sociology, not so much in the application of Marxist social models (although this will no doubt continue), but rather in what sociology can contribute to our understanding of such things as everyday life, social structure, social movements, and the shaping of identity. (On this topic, see *Community, Identity, and Ideology: Social Science Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, Charles E. Carter and Carol L. Meyers, eds., SBTs 6, Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1996). Second, I look for an increasing engagement with the challenges posed by the New Historicism and particularly with its insistence on the role ideology plays in the production and interpretation of historiographical literature. Although currently a small minority, scholars working along these lines have already raised important questions about the ways the exertion of political power may have shaped the composition of biblical texts and, more directly, how political ideologies have profoundly influenced the way Israel history has and is being written. (Here I am thinking, for example, of Keith Whitelam's *The Invention of Ancient Israel: The Silencing of Palestinian History* [London/New York: Routledge, 1996] as well as recent assessments of W. F. Albright.)

The essays in this volume represent an impressive cross-section of the wide-ranging discussions associated with the history of Israel and the historical witness of its texts. For those wanting to explore the fascinating questions of history, this is the place to begin.

L. Daniel Hawk

Antony F. Campbell and Mark A. O'Brien. *Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History: Origins, Upgrades, Present Text*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2000. vi+505 pages, paper, \$37.00.

This book annotates the text of Deuteronomy-Kings according to the Deuteronomistic History theory. The 'unfolding' of the title, therefore, is meant in rigorously critical terms. Campbell and O'Brien are well known for their previous work on the subject, and the volume shows the marks of their study. The form of the Deuteronomistic theory is their own modification of the principal current theories. A Josianic 'DH' is preceded by older forms of the material, and followed by exilic revisions. The principal older material is found in a 'Conquest Narrative' (Joshua), a 'Deliverance Collection' (Judges), and a 'Prophetic Record', already identified by Campbell in 1 Samuel 1-2 Kings 10 (*Of Prophets and Kings*; CBQMS 17; Washington, 1986). The exilic revisions come in more than one form ('royal focus' and 'national



focus'). The form of the theory is thus indebted in part to Noth, but also to Cross's double redaction and indeed Smend's concept of multiple exilic revisions (as is O'Brien's *The Deuteronomistic History Hypothesis: a Reassessment* (OBO 92; Freiburg, Switzerland, 1989), but is distinct from both.

The book is best described in terms of its layout. It consists of the biblical text in double columns, marked in various ways to represent the literary provenance of individual sections (sidelining, double-sidelining, italics etc.). The coding is set out in footers, which vary somewhat according to the part of DH under consideration. The biblical text is annotated with comments, keyed to the text by a kind of footnoting system, and falling into three parts (corresponding to the three terms in the book's subtitle): 'Text signals' (a basic commentary designed to highlight literary-critical issues); 'text-history approach' (commenting on the composite nature of the text, where this is perceived), and 'Present-text potential'. The last of these is intended to provide reflections on how this potential 'may be exploited in all fidelity to the text in order to fuel imagination in its use' (p. 1). The three divisions of comment are not all pursued regularly to the same degree, since that is not always thought to be necessary, as when large tracts of text are from the same level of tradition. Then the 'Present-text potential' predominates, and the comment becomes rather expository.

The concept of the book is a serious attempt to deal with both diachronic and synchronic aspects of reading the Old Testament, in recognition that an older form of biblical criticism, concentrating on textual origins, had not proved widely acceptable, yet insisting that honest reading may not dispense with diachronic study. The result is sometimes a little uneasy. The 'present text potential' can still be rather source-oriented, e.g. 'The text of chaps. 16-18 [of 1 Samuel] cannot be read as a unity. Attempts to do so invariably deal only with part of the text, not its total horizon' (p. 260). The 'diachronic' mode is thus kept firmly in the foreground. Even so, the expressed interest in theological interpretation does come through.

An Introduction explains the nature of the book, offers an overview of scholarship on DH, and gives an outline of the theory that will be followed. There is an index of biblical references, and two sets of tables bearing on the composition of DH: the first, 'Patterns and Judges', tabulates motifs and expressions in Judges in relation to each judge; the second displays four patterns of judgment-formula in Kings.

The book is a useful text for the critical aspects of courses on the Historical Books.

Gordon McConville, University of Gloucestershire.

Richard D. Nelson. *The Historical Books*. Nashville: Abingdon., 1998.

Having read, and been much impressed by, Nelson's *Raising up a Faithful Priest* several years ago, my appetite was whetted for a further volume from this interesting and insightful scholar. His examination of the Ancient Israelites' sacrificial system through the lens of anthropology, cultural studies and social psychology provided a stimulating perspective of Leviticus which offered a possible and intriguing rationale behind the priestly/sacrificial order. Nelson's insights emphasized the theology of shalom and the way shalom may have been achieved through sacrifice.

## Book Reviews

Imagine, then, my personal excitement when *The Historical Books* was published and available, for I am a devotee of these narratives. To my disappointment, Nelson has written a survey of the historical books of the Hebrew Bible, and a shallow one at that, for an audience which is perhaps studying these texts for the first time in either a Seminary or a church setting. It is a beginners primer if you like, to the historical narratives. As he surveys the various books Nelson presents themes and ideas which occur, such as land, leadership, prophecy, kingship, exile. Each book is presented as a separate unit within the whole of the historical material but Nelson doesn't explore the interrelationships between these units.

Recent scholarship has been debating the historicity of the so-called historical books and since the discussion has turned into a maximalist - minimalist debate in which one camp argues that the historical books are faithful accounts of historical events whilst the other argues that extra-biblical evidence suggests that the historical books do not present a faithful account of historical events, there has developed an interest in the nature of historical writing as a form. What is historical writing and what is its purpose? Nelson hints at this philosophical argument in part 1 and for me that is the most interesting section. To his credit, Nelson's notes and bibliography point the reader in the direction of further reading which could elucidate and inform in this debate, but ultimately it is a safe and uncritical survey.

Sadly, Nelson perpetuates the historical-critical approach to textual analysis when he discusses patterns of reading and his look at the historical events which undergird the historical books is cursory to say the least. For a scholar who explored the sacrificial system in such an intriguing way this book is by no means as thoughtful, careful or provocative.

Dorothy Penny-Larter

Jonathan E. Dyck, *The Theocratic Ideology of the Chronicler*, Biblical Interpretation Series, 33 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 256 pp., \$86.00.

In this revision of his Ph.D. thesis, Dyck explores the relationship between the Chronicler's expression of his theocratic ideas (the combined spheres of religion and politics) and their consequences within his socio-historical context, the Jewish community living around Jerusalem during the late Persian period. The first two chapters are devoted to explaining Dyck's particular approach of ideological criticism, which is derived from the social sciences. He does not have an interest in the interpretation of the text as such, but rather in the contextual functions and social force of the text. He also surveys the research on the Chronicler's purpose, while making a major distinction between the author's conscious communicative intentions and motives, and a work's sometimes not so conscious contextual functions. Dyck adopts Ricoeur's three-stage analysis of ideology: distortion, legitimation, and integration/identity: "At the level of integration, ideology functions to preserve the [social] order.... At the level of legitimation, ideology serves to maintain systems of domination.... And at the level of distortion, ideology reifies and alienates..." (74). Dyck applies this three-stage analysis in reverse order to three readings of Chronicles.

In Chapter Three, Dyck compares and contrasts the identity of "Israel" in Chronicles and in Ezra-Nehemiah, discussing how that identity is defined by the exile.

For Ezra-Nehemiah, the exile was a watershed event that established the means for recognizing the true "Israel" as the returnees from exile. For the Chronicler, the exile created a chronological break that needed to be overcome by reestablishing Israel's identity. The Chronicler articulated a more encompassing concept of an "all Israel" theocracy, but one in which Judah and Jerusalem had a distinct place. His ideology of identity provided continuity between past traditions and the current community in such a way as to establish the "identity" of the power structures of the post-exilic community as well as the "identity" of the rest of the people of Israel, who were expected to believe in this social system.

In Chapter Four Dyck, argues from the point of view of legitimation that the Chronicler's ideology of identity of Israel sought to legitimate the role of Jerusalem as the focal point for those belonging to "all Israel." The Chronicler did not abandon the distinction the exile created between true Israelite, the returnees to Jerusalem, and non-Israelites (Ezra-Nehemiah), but transformed that perspective to give hegemony to the returnees over all of the land of Israel. Dyck claims that the Chronicler was a member of the ruling and priestly classes in Jerusalem, and represented their self-understanding. The Chronicler's work not only encouraged his community to claim its rightful place and to restore the theocratic kingdom, but also sought to exercise power by shaping the beliefs of the inhabitants of "all Israel," of whom some might not have welcomed such claims of hegemony.

In Chapter Five, Dyck turns to a reconstruction of the internal social context that the Chronicler was addressing. Although the details are based on inference, Dyck concludes that there was a system of hierarchies extending from the basic unit of Israelite social structure, the "houses of the fathers," up to the Second Temple, an institution fulfilling conflicting roles for the community, the local elite, and the Persian Empire.

Chapter Six examines the Chroniclers' work from Ricoeur's perspective of "distortion." Dyck argues that one should read Chronicles with suspicion. To the degree that the Second Temple was an oppressive force to some segments of the social structure, the Chronicler's legitimation of the identity of the Second Temple, Jerusalem, and "all Israel," functioned ideologically, and is distorted. There was a gap between the conscious claims of the Second Temple hierarchy and the beliefs of those dominated by it, a gap that the Chronicler's ideology bridged. Therefore, the Chronicler's rewriting of history with its theocratic ideology was a necessity (of which he was not necessarily conscious) driven by internal social forces in the interest of establishing the power of the dominant party, the Second Temple hierarchy.

Dyck's program is admirable: to identify the Chronicler's ideology and correlate his motives and intentions with contextual functions. He faces the problem, however, of being limited to the primary resource of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah, with limited other evidence about the period in question, a problem that he does recognize (p. 51). Partly as a result, he both makes methodological claims and draws conclusions that are difficult to support. For instance, Dyck claims to be able to separate the Chronicler's individual ideology from the Chronicler's expression of the ruling community's ideology, in order to focus on the latter; however, he does not clarify how the two can be distinguished within Chronicles. He sees Chronicles as an expression of the ideology of the dominant position, and yet states that the Chronicler "played no small



part" in creating that position (p. 4). One wonders if Chronicles is an expression of an individual's ideology, or a window into the ideology of a community, or a work that established an ideology. He also states that the ideological consequences are not necessarily related to the Chronicler's intention, and that he will focus on the unintended consequences (p. 213), but one wonders how he will determine what the Chronicler did not intend? Moreover, one finds out in the last chapter that the ideological consequences, which are based on the hypothesis that the Chronicler was part of the ruling elite and upon the reconstructed social setting, are not necessarily actual consequences but potential ones (my wording), which exist within the given social relationships (see, pp. 165, 213-14).

The primary strength of Dyck's work is that he brings a different perspective through which to view the issues involving Chronicles and the Second Temple community. When Dyck says, "The trick is to generate belief. It is one thing to intend to urge one's audience..., quite another to successfully persuade one's readers.... It is the task of ideology to ensure the success of the perlocutionary act and to secure the belief..." (p. 216)," he is describing the focus of classical rhetorical criticism. However, his ideological approach sets the rhetorical act in a specific context and focuses on the power roles at work among the different strata of the social setting. As a result, Dyck's reconstruction of the social structures and forces of the Second Temple community and their dynamic interplay with the work of the Chronicler will be of service to students of the Book of Chronicles and this era of Judaism.

Rodney K. Duke, Appalachian State University

Richard J. Clifford, *The Wisdom Literature*. Interpreting Biblical Texts Series. Nashville: Abingdon, 1998. 181pp.

Six compositions associated with Hebrew Wisdom are introduced in *The Wisdom Literature*: Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom of Ben Sira, Wisdom of Solomon, and Song of Songs. Clifford aims to give "just enough information to make you a good reader," focusing on "the world of the text." I believe he has succeeded ably.

Designed for the student with little background in biblical wisdom writings, this paperback alludes to the maze of scholarly theories without becoming needlessly entangled. Attention focuses instead on the larger issues of literary / historical context. Parallels stemming from ancient near eastern sapiential writings surface often in this volume. Each book is introduced by either a summary (Job) or sampling (Proverbs, Wisdom of Ben Sira).

Two chapters deserve particular note. In Ecclesiastes Clifford's approach shifts. There he summarizes five scholar's interpretations (from Zimmerli to Seow). The reader is left to select one of the views, or to develop one of his / her own. In Wisdom of Solomon a summary of Jewish activity in Egypt, combined with an overview of Hellenistic religion and philosophy provide insights vital to the understanding of this work from the first century B.C.

If one is looking for a verse-by-verse commentary or an in-depth discussion of critical issues, *The Wisdom Literature* will not satisfy. If, however, one is looking for

a primer which will open the door both to the world of the text and to the text itself, this volume is a very strong candidate. Paul Overland

E. John Hamlin, *Surely There is a Future: A Commentary on the Book of Ruth*. International Theological Commentary, Frederick Carlson Holmgren and George A. F. Knight, edd. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmanns Publishing Co.) 1996. 82pp. + xi pp.

John Hamlin's brief treatment of the book of Ruth is a good, introductory-level commentary for someone unable to deal directly with the Hebrew text. It is not overly technical in its approach, but more than adequate for someone preparing a Sunday school lesson, a small group Bible study or a personal Bible study. A three-page bibliography leads the interested reader to books and articles that are also not overly technical in presentation.

Ruth is a highly-structured book, using chiasm, repetition and contrast, among other literary devices. The author shows awareness of these features and shows the implications of this structuring for readers in a straight-forward manner, without being tedious.

Certain cultural information is necessary for an understanding of the story and Hamlin gives background cultural data in brief form as well -- just what the reader needs to know to understand, for instance, the gleaning laws, Levirate marriage laws, land sale and transfer laws and customs that are basic to an appreciation of the story and of the motivations of its characters.

The commentary presents semantic data for relatively few words, just those that need clarifying for the sake of following the story-line or for illuminating an essential point. This is a strength of the work; consistent with the non-technical approach. However, in general Hamlin's explanations of word meanings are a weak point - the explanations are often strained. Perhaps this owes to an intent to bring out the "theological" sense of a term; a sense which at times just isn't part of the makeup of the word. For example, on p. 13 he writes, "The basic meaning of the Hebrew verb translated 'started' (*qum*) is to rise up out of a condition of lethargy, sorrow and discouragement." However, in fact, the basic meaning of the verb is much more simple, "to rise up, to begin, to confront (e.g. an enemy)." Any additional qualification of the meaning would only be a result of factors conditioned by the context. Nothing about "lethargy, sorrow and discouragement" is implied by the use of this particular verb in the context of chapter 1, verse 7 as cited by the author. The text of the narrative does at length show Naomi in this condition, but it is in no way implied by the use of this high-frequency Hebrew verb. Another example of misleading semantic data is found on p. 27. While the verb *gur* is often explained as meaning "to live as temporary residents," in fact it does not imply anything as to the intended time of the stay. Rather, it refers principally to the status of the residents, i.e., resident aliens who do not enjoy the full status and rights of natural residents. Elsewhere in the commentary definitions are accurate and helpful (e.g., *hayil* and *go'el* on p. 25). The reader will do well to use a lexicon or Bible dictionary to check the data presented.

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The application to the life of the church is helpful at points, but Hamlin uses the commentary to argue for the acceptance of women pastors -- a point irrelevant to the exposition of Ruth. This is a simple story of a woman who ministers to another in need, acting in a non-official, "Good Samaritan" capacity. It is also about a man who takes initiative to minister to someone in need of help and protection -- and in doing so serves as the protecting "wings" [Heb. *knaphim*] of the Lord. These two characters are contrasted with two others, a male and a female, who do not minister when presented with opportunity. Whether an argument for women pastors is to be made from other parts of scripture or not, the book of Ruth does not speak to the issue.

Theron Young, Portugese Bible Institute, Infantado, Portugal

Tod Linafelt and Timothy Beale. *Ruth and Esther*. Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry. Collegeville, Minn: The Liturgical Press. 1999.

In the introduction to his commentary on Esther Tim Beale writes, "On first reading it appears so simple, so whole, and its meaning so completely self-evident. Yet the closer one gets to this text, the more perplexing it becomes. Questions lead not to answers but to more profound questions" (ix). Both of these commentators delight in exploring texts and both explore with a delicious fascination these "simple" stories. We are in for a treat!

Tod Linafelt begins his commentary by dismissing the assertion that Ruth is a story of "utter simplicity and naivete", proposing that this an ambiguous text where meaning is uncertain and often unsettling, whose writer was a person of immense skill. It is these ambiguities which are to be negotiated by the reader and not necessarily solved. Immediately the reader of this commentary knows that Linafelt's careful and meticulous exegesis will offer possibilities for the reader to consider and not a definitive meaning. Already the traditional historical-critical approach to textual analysis has been compromised and Linafelt is entering into the scholarly discourse that surrounds the book of Ruth. There is an assumption here that the reader of this commentary will have already familiarized her/himself with Ruth criticism.

Linafelt's is the third new commentary on Ruth to have been produced in the last five years. During the last decade monographs and essays have accompanied the publication of scholarly material generated by and focused on the women in the Old Testament. Feminist scholars, structuralists, formalists and intertextual critics have found nuances and colors of meaning in a book which has lain hidden in the interstices of the Deuteronomistic History. Linafelt's commentary synthesizes much of this work, interacts with it, and claims for the book of Ruth a place in the canon as a critique of the Davidic monarchy and patriarchal historiography, an elevation of Ruth as a paradigm for womanhood, and, as an exploration of kinship relationships, recognizes the important thread of the feminine voice with its inherently alternative values which counterpoints and often undermines the powerful voice of the masculine in the biblical text.

The commentary is a conventional one offering expert linguistic and structural analysis and it is certainly a very scholarly document. Linafelt's reading is methodically careful and attentive; his deconstruction meticulous and thoughtful. Although only 80 pages in length this commentary is very "meaty". I am concerned that Linafelt has



declined to explore the community and ethnic relationships evident in the text as part of his study of kinship relationships and that he has ignored the Covenant/legal issues impinging on those kinship relationships. Perhaps a cultural-historical, ideological perspective would prove illuminating. But within the confines of his objectives this is a flawless study and one very worthy of attention.

Esther on the other hand, remains one of my least favorite books of the Old Testament and Timothy Beale's commentary does not convince me otherwise. Beauty contests, drinking parties, public humiliation of persons claiming recognition of their human dignity, and violent brutality dominate the text. The ethnic barbarity perpetrated by both Persians and Jews leaves me with a bad taste in my mouth and convinces me that the current interracial and interreligious problems in Israel emanate from, and are exacerbated by, such biblical texts as Esther. Beale ignores the moral dimension of Esther and that is problematic in itself. Haman's anti-semitism is discussed, but negative Jewish attitudes to Persians are dismissed as later additions to the original text. Regardless of what was added later, this is the text we have and it reveals a ghetto mentality, a people that will seek revenge. No wonder God is hidden from view! Like Luther I really can't understand why Esther is part of the canon.

Dorothy Penny-Larter

A. Boyd Luter and Barry C. Davis *God Behind the Seen: Expositions of the Books of Ruth & Esther Expositor's Guide to the Historical Books* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books) 1995. 377pp.

The treatments of Luter and Davis are, by design, popular and non-technical. They are more homiletic in style than strictly expository. Both authors give reliable comments on the literary structure of the books, helpful for readers unaccustomed to picking up on structural clues.

A. Boyd Luter's treatment of Ruth gets off to a rough start. Inaccurate historical, geographical and literary data detract from the quality of the work. For instance, the fields of Moab would not be visible at some 50 miles from Bethlehem (p. 25) even on the clearest of days. There is no evidence to suggest that Jews considered gentiles (anachronism?) as dogs in this period (p. 27). The "personal guidance of the Lord" is scarcely visible in the book (note, p. 35). In fact, the indirect nature of the Lord's guidance in the book is at the heart of the message. The term "Moabites" is used in 2:2 and 2:21, contrary to the note on p. 74. Other inaccuracies could be listed. However, in later chapters the comments are more precise and helpful. The book is to be recommended for its treatment of Ruth's chastity in regard to her threshing-floor encounter with Boaz (pp. 56-57, 60). Equally well presented are the motivations for the kinsman-redeemer's declination to marry Ruth (pp. 70-73).

Barry C. Davis' work on Esther frequently introduces anecdotes and trivia which may be entertaining, but are irrelevant for the elucidation of the meaning of the text (e.g., Hawaiian "kapakahi", pp. 261-62). Alliterated outlines are a plus for some, but generally a minus to good exposition (e.g., p. 283).

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Important questions about Esther, Mordecai and Haman are left unanswered by the book of Esther. Perhaps the best indicators are to be found in the culture and historical context of the period of the book. For instance, is Esther the grand prize winner in the "Miss Persia" beauty contest, of which she was a voluntary participant? A series of Niphal verbs in 2:8, clearly passive in meaning, seem to point away from this conclusion of Davis. The decree of the king "was heard," the virgins "were gathered" and Esther "was taken" to the king's palace. Given the culture of the participants, it is more likely that Esther had no choice in the matter.

Is Mordecai a stubbornly proud Jew who refuses to bow to Haman because of a racial prejudice against Agagites (a.k.a., Amalekites)? Nowhere are we informed of a tension between Jews and Amalekites in this late period. An oblique reference to Haman as an Agagite would not point us in that direction. Mordecai's refusal to bow has an analogy in a source not too distant historically and geographically from Esther. Daniel's three friends also refused to bow (Dan. 3:8-18), to the praise of their character. It is at least as likely that Mordecai's refusal was based on religious zeal.

Based on these and other shaky conclusions, Davis concludes at the beginning of the commentary that Mordecai and Esther are carnal Jews who have forsaken the worship of the Lord. This colors his commentary throughout the rest of the book. The conclusion is at best based on an argument from silence. It is more likely that they are struggling to survive as exiled "hostages" in a hostile world, where choices are few and Jews are lowly esteemed. Reserve may be considered prudent in the face of mortal threat. Mordecai's refusal to bow to a pagan ruler and Esther's request for Jews to fast on her behalf (4:16) reflect the tension in which they lived. The "down-playing" of Esther and Mordecai's spiritual side is perfectly consistent with the message of the book. In a world where God is unseen and His name not mentioned, He still works to orchestrate events according to His will and protect His people. Theron Young

Gordon F. Davies. *Ezra and Nehemiah*. Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry. Collegeville, Minn: The Liturgical Press. 1999.

Sometimes the application of an alternative and different interpretative methodology reveals a great deal of the text. Tricky passages are often illuminated and the reader finds a new level of understanding. Familiar passages not considered problematic can receive a different twist in the hands of a commentator. Often the reader is challenged to return to the text for another look, a further exploration in order to make sense of the material being examined. If nothing else then, the role of a commentary is to engage the reader in the hermeneutical process.

In this highly pedestrian, dismal commentary the offerings of rhetorical criticism in the discussion of Ezra-Nehemiah seem small indeed. Davies makes no attempt to explain the impact of his translation on the overall reading/rhetorical value of the text. He does not explore the way in which the text is constructed rhetorically, but takes a piecemeal approach to each translated section making little or no connection to the previously discussed material. Interesting features and issues emerging from his reading lie unexplored, this largely because the commentary is a servant of rhetorical

criticism rather than rhetorical criticism being in service of textual examination and interpretation. What a disappointment. Dorothy Penny-Larter

James A. Wharton, *Job* (Westminster Bible Companion Series). Louisville, KY: Westminster, 1999. ISBN0-664-25267-2.

The importance of Job's questions will grow only greater as Western culture ages. Despite medical advances, health is not indomitable. Despite sophisticated national defense systems, a democratic metropolis holds no guarantee against devoted terrorism. Indeed, "No faith question is more central than the agonized 'Why?' addressed to God," (p. 1).

In *style*, Wharton's volume is less of a commentary, more of a reading guide. The layout is not verse-by-verse, but section-by-section. In fact, some sections are rearranged (all Eliphaz's speeches are grouped together) to help the reader grasp the flow of his arguments. Footnotes are nonexistent, resulting in a more relaxed "read". Text-critical and word studies notes are few. But where included, they are quite significant. E.g., in 13.11a should we read, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" [KJV] or "See, he will kill me; I have no hope" [NRSV]? Did God simply "answer" Job from a whirlwind, or did he by his answer verge on "rescuing" him? This latter example becomes pivotal as Wharton explains his all-important interpretation of God's reply.

Careful not to claim the "last word" in *interpretation*, an important piece of his scheme surfaces in Wharton's view that *by the very act of answering Job*, God was offering his validation of Job's integrity. And this, despite the confrontational tone found in God's answer. As a result, Job's compliant response expresses more an acceptance of the conflict (since God has affirmed his servant's integrity) rather than a resolution of it. This seems to explain Wharton's conclusion expressed much earlier, that "the function of Job, from time of its inclusion among the Holy Scripture...has *never* been to provide answers to the questions it raises. Rather it has functioned...as a means of keeping the questions urgent and contemporary" (p. 2, ital. original).

One of the important gauges of a resource's value stems from the author's *grasp of the subject*. In this regard Wharton demonstrates a wonderful breadth. A casual reader easily becomes lost in the lengthy cycles of dialogue with Job's friends. Wharton crystallizes the message, waking up the reader so he/she does not miss an important piece of the logical puzzle.

To summarize, if you are looking for a technical resource with significant linguistic and bibliographic information you will need to look elsewhere. But if you desire a guide pointing the way through the maze of Joban dialogues, a seasoned professor offering a fresh perspective on the "upside-down trust" expressed by Job in God (and by God in Job?—see p. 159), Wharton's work will prove refreshing and useful.

Paul Overland



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Konrad Schaeffer, *Psalms* (Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2001) pp.xlv + 399. \$ 49.95.

Readers of the psalms have been greatly blessed in the last few years by a series of studies which have refocused attention on the primary purpose of the Psalms, to teach us to pray. J. C. McCann's *A Theological Introduction to the Book of the Psalms* (1993), E. Zenger's *A God of Vengeance?* (1996) and R. E. Murphy's *The Gift of the Psalms* (2000) are all fairly popular works of this genre. But with Schaeffer's commentary we have something really substantial, yet at the same time quite accessible. It is based on the Hebrew text, always transliterated and translated, and the latest developments in Psalm studies.

His lengthy introduction discusses the nature of Hebrew poetry, its use of repetition and parallelism. Here he draws heavily on the work of Kugel and Alter, who have taken us well beyond the insights of Robert Lowth. Then he discusses the way the psalter is organized as a book, not as a random anthology, developing the ideas of Wilson and others.

The most valuable and longest section of his introduction is entitled 'A School of Prayer'. 'In the Psalter a believing poet speaks to God about God. Across the centuries worshipping communities and individuals have adopted this book to express their own faith and devotion.' (p. xxv) For Schaeffer, though, the words of the psalmist are not just human words, but God's word and they show us how and what we ought to pray for. The symbolic language used in the Psalms enables the modern reader to identify with the sentiments of the original poet. The pain and joy of the psalmist become ours as we pray the psalms.

Sometimes of course the psalms express feelings that the modern Christian is uncomfortable with, for they seem incompatible with the view that we should forgive our enemies. But Schaeffer argues that they give expression to central human emotions that we should express to God. We should be angry with oppressive institutions and wicked perpetrators. He asks rhetorically 'Does one pray to a God who tolerates persons or systems which treat people unjustly?' (p.xliii) The difficulties we face using these psalms serve 'as an invitation to enter more deeply into the mystery of God's word. The vexing problems and fearful insecurities of life, the travails that afflict every human being are all reflected in the Psalter.' (p. xlv)

The commentary itself is full and thorough, explaining the structure of each psalm, its relationship to adjacent psalms, and its place in the psalter as a whole. Careful attention is given to the exegesis of each line of the psalm, and their reuse in New Testament contexts is often noted. But the form-critical analysis that has so dominated psalm scholarship is rarely mentioned in the commentary and only briefly discussed in an appendix. This seems a healthy development, as much of such discussion is not very fruitful. However I do think the interpretation could have been given a sharper focus if Schaeffer had reflected more on the fact that the psalms had been collected and arranged in their present order sometime in the post-exilic era. Their cries for help and affirmations of faith in those difficult days for the people of God become the more pointed and poignant when read against the exilic situation. The titles of the psalms, whether authentic or not, give an insight into the editors' understanding of these texts.

But these are minor grouses about a great commentary. From now on it will

be one of the first I consult when I work on the psalms, and every theological student should be encouraged to read at least the introduction. If the church could take on board the insights of this commentary and the works mentioned above, its worship could be transformed and made more fit to be offered to Almighty God.

Gordon Wenham, University of Gloucester

Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 1-9* (Anchor Bible Series). New York: Doubleday, 2000. ISBN 0-385-26437-2.

At an SBL panel of authors in Nashville last fall Professor Fox was asked, "What is distinctive about your commentary on Proverbs?" He replied that the Anchor Bible publishers gave him free rein to organize his work as he wished. The result was a combination of verse-exposition together with excursive sections that illuminate larger issues of wisdom literature. This aspect of book design will present itself as one of the first features striking any who peruse his volume.

Is such freestyle an asset in commentary writing? If you are looking for an in-depth treatment of Proverbs, Fox's format offers a clear advantage. Reading his work is like sitting in a captivating Bible lecture presented by someone so steeped in the text that a single biblical phrase evokes a string of insights and associations ranging far beyond the immediate text, while nonetheless very illuminating for the present passage.

For example, after treating the introduction of 1.8-9, we meet segments entitled "Fathers as Teachers", "Mothers as Teachers", and "Ornament Imagery in Proverbs". Again, following detailed examination of 1.10-19 we read of "The 'Deed-Consequence Nexus'" argued 45 years ago by K. Koch—a concept serious students of wisdom literature need to be aware of. In another segment we are invited to probe more carefully the identity of "The Gang" which tempts youth in ch. 1. Exactly what sort of persons may this group have represented in the world of the young, impressionable audience?

If one lacks the patience to "stay tuned" through these excurses which break through the fabric of the commentary, it is possible to fast-forward from one verse-exposition to the next. But that would result in missing some of the best that Fox has to offer.

In addition to excurses scattered through the exposition, more substantial essays gather toward the end of the volume. One appropriately gives Fox's view concerning Lady Wisdom: exactly who should we understand her to be? After reviewing several scholarly options he concludes, "Lady Wisdom is indeed godlike, but that is a literary guise, and we should grant the author and readers the literary competency needed to use and read tropes in an appropriate manner" (354). He offers a presentation that in my opinion is as convincing as it is refreshing. Minute issues are treated as well, such as one and one-half pages of shrunken print explaining perplexing problem of rendering *'amon* (artisan, constantly, or ward/nursling?) in 8.30.

Further assets in this work should be noted. International wisdom of the ancient world is very well represented, both in introduction and throughout the commentary. Special attention is given to *peshat* (literalist)-oriented Jewish commentators of the medieval era. Fifteen pages unfold careful word studies of Hebrew

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synonyms for “wisdom” and “folly”. Textual traditions are conveniently summarized, followed by extensive text-critical notes at the back.

Is there room for differing with this impressive work? Certainly. Some will question, for example, whether he has convincingly argued that “it is improbable that many—if any—of the proverbs were written by Solomon” (p. 56). Others will wonder whether he is correct to infer that “[t]here is little logical progression from lecture to lecture [of Prov. 1-9], nor is there any evident organizational principle in their disposition” (p. 324). Do points of discussion such as these detract from the overall value of the volume? Clearly they do not; they only incite reexamination and invite scholarly debate. This work will be a regularly-referenced volume in my future study of Proverbs.

Paul Overland

Walter Brueggemann, *Isaiah*, Westminster Bible Companion Commentary Series, Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998. 2 vols. ISBN 0-664-25524-8 (vol. 1) and 0-664-25791-7 (vol. 2).

Three questions are useful when deciding whether to purchase a commentary. First, does the author bring qualifications meriting publication of a volume such as this? Second, do the author’s conclusions concerning specific critical questions lead to teaching that will be most useful to me? Third, do insights in typical passages significantly deepen my grasp of the message found there?

As far as Dr. Brueggemann’s qualifications are concerned, he is highly respected in the field of Old Testament. Among the scores of seminar presentations available at Society for Biblical Literature meetings, his sessions are routinely “standing room only.” One has only to read his *Theology of the Old Testament* to appreciate the breadth of grasp he has attained in the field of Hebrew Bible.

Concerning specific questions, two may be worth mentioning. First, Brueggemann follows the current consensus that detects three time periods within Isaiah: 8<sup>th</sup> century BC for chs. 1-39, 6<sup>th</sup> century exilic for chs. 40-55, and 6<sup>th</sup> century post-exilic for chs. 56-66. This conclusion seems rather assumed than explained. Perhaps in another of his works Dr. Brueggemann has accounted for this conclusion. I would have appreciated more information at this point. But that omission is likely due in part to the intended audience of the Westminster Bible Companion series. The expressed objective is to serve dedicated laity, whose patience for and interest in scholarly detail may quickly wear thin.

The dating/authorship question has a bearing on a second critical question, how one views the announcement that Cyrus, a Persian emperor, would rescue exiled Israel (44.28, 45.1). Some view this as having been recorded after-the-fact, which, though easier to believe, is problematic for the reasoning of Isaiah. In this section God is arguing that his credentials exceed those of false gods precisely because he can foretell the future. Brueggemann views the announcement as genuinely predictive, preserving the force of logic in this section (p. 75). Admittedly, the predictive impact would be greater were this section (with chs. 1-39) attributed to Isaiah of the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

Finally, do insights in typical passages significantly deepen one’s grasp of the message found there? Often the answer is a resounding “yes.” Without burdening the



lay reader with Hebrew, Brueggemann skillfully draws on his rich knowledge of history and language to unfold texture and tenor within the text. At times I differ with interpretive conclusions (such as his assessment of Isa. 53 as better describing a suffering nation than a solitary redeemer), yet after the reading of other passages I emerge indebted for insights gained.

Paul Overland

John N. Oswalt. *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, Mi.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998.

Among the many commentaries on Isaiah published in recent years, Oswalt's is the most comprehensive. While recent commentaries have concentrated on such aspects of the book as composition, rhetorical forms, historical context, or theology, this commentary addresses all these elements – and more. The volume begins with an introduction that discusses the issues of composition, content, and structure as these relate to Isaiah 40-66, followed by an outline of the contents and an extensive bibliography. (A thorough introduction precedes the first volume of the commentary, published previously.) Each passage typically begins with the author's translation, an overview of the passage with attention to structure and scholarly discussion and then proceeds to verse-by-verse commentary. Copious footnotes appear throughout, and occasional excurses and "special notes" are inserted at relevant points. The volume concludes with indexes of subjects, authors, scriptures, and Hebrew words.

Oswalt makes a strong case that these chapters, as well as those that precede them, are the work of the 8<sup>th</sup> Century prophet Isaiah. Supplementing arguments made in the introduction of the first volume, he links the mainstream critical hypothesis of a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Isaiah (or an extended compositional history) with a deficient view of biblical prophecy (one that makes no place for supernatural prediction). He then develops this argument throughout the body of the commentary. A particularly forceful point in the argument is made in the discussion of those prophecies that predict the rise of Cyrus. The prophecies present Cyrus as an instrument of Israel's deliverance from captivity and point to his victory over Babylon as a demonstration of YHWH's will and power. None of the gods of Babylon, argues the prophet, could ever have conceived such a thing. It is entirely unforeseen, an authentically new historical circumstance that points to YHWH's uniqueness and sovereignty as Creator. (See, for example, the comments on pp. 103-04 199-207, 270-72.) Oswalt argues that if these texts were composed, as is commonly supposed, shortly before 540 B.C.E. (when Babylon fell), the central point they make is undercut. Why would an anonymous prophet argue that the triumphs of Cyrus represent YHWH's unimagined new work when this could easily be surmised from contemporary events? Even pagan prophets could do the same. To carry the intended impact the prophecies would have had to be revealed supernaturally, well before events pointed to Cyrus' ultimate triumph.

Oswalt's arguments for the compositional unity of Isaiah 40-66 are well-developed and well-informed. However, one wonders whether he has created an unnecessary dichotomy. (See especially the Special Note on p. 192.) It does not necessarily follow that positing a "Second Isaiah" involves a rejection of supernatural prediction and a denial of the testimony of the book about itself, especially given our

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(highly individualistic) notions of authorship and how little we really know about the composition and transmission of traditional materials in the ancient world. ("Accepting the evidence as given" versus holding that "evidence has been tampered with" seems a distinctively modern way of framing the issue.) Could there not be a mediating position, one that is open both to the possibility of a complex compositional history and to supernatural prediction? To be sure, the element of prediction seems moot if the materials in chapters 40-55 were composed in the mid to late 540's. But what if, for the sake of argument, they were composed before or around 550 B.C.E., when Cyrus overthrew the Median king Astyages? If this were the case, the prophet would be commenting on contemporary events and predicting their eventual outcome, something Isaiah of Jerusalem (and his prophetic colleagues) did as a matter of course. Explaining the meaning of YHWH's work among the nations and predicting its outcome in this context would have been no less remarkable than, for example, Jeremiah's or Habakkuk's predictions of Babylon's rise to prominence.

Apart from the debate on composition, Oswalt's view of Isaianic authorship affords keen insight into the unity of the entire book. He perceives the theme of servanthood as its unifying theme. Isa. 1-5 introduces the book by presenting the present and future of God's people. Isaiah's vision (Isa. 6) then represents a call to servanthood. The rest of the book then flows out of this vision. Correctly determining whom to trust (Isa. 7-39) forms the basis for servanthood. The vocation of a servant is laid out in Isa. 40-55, while the marks of servanthood, i.e. the divine character replicated in God's servants, unites the material in Isa. 56-66. The reader will note a theological sensitivity in the identification and description of this theme. Indeed, a depth of theological insight is perhaps the best feature of the commentary, outweighing even the author's lucid interaction with scholarly literature and rich linguistic analysis. Oswalt writes in an accessible narrative style that lapses easily into theological reflection. Breaking the mold of the "scholarly" commentary, he consistently explores the spiritual dimension of Isaiah's message, with an eye toward its relevance for Christian thought and life. In so doing Oswalt has given us a commentary that illumines both the intellectual power and the spiritual majesty of this "prince of the prophets."

L. Daniel Hawk

Johan Renkema, *Lamentations* (Historical Commentary on the Old Testament Series). Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 1998. ISBN 90-429-0677-4. Paperback, 641 pages.

First impressions generated by Dr. Renkema's volume on Lamentations proved unfounded. When only five chapters of scripture result in more than six hundred pages of commentary one tends to expect tedious scholarly detail. Further examination revealed a volume that is indeed scholarly. But it is not tedious.

The solid, scholarly dimension appears in the author's level of ease when handling the original language and insights concerning literary structure. Quickly one observes that each segment of the commentary begins by reproducing the respective biblical phrase in pointed Hebrew (also translated). Careful attention is given to word meanings as the text is reviewed.

Insights on poetic structure form a hallmark of Renkema's work. Following careful surface-structural analysis, he has become persuaded that "we are dealing with a unified, 'one-piece' composition" (p. 72). He proceeds to provide structural summaries for each poem, discovering in them varying degrees of concentricity or external parallelism. Literary devices (inclusios, responses, external parallelism, and the like) are further summarized in a convenient format at the head of each subunit of poetry.

But lexical and poetic insights function for the author only as tools to achieve a greater project—the discovery of theological significance in the text. And here the richness of inspired scripture gleams most brightly under the scholar's lens. Consider an extract elucidating *chesed* (steadfast love) in 3.22. Declining the connotation of covenant-obligated love (since the covenant now lies shattered due to Israel's persistent rejection of God), Renkema proposes a different connotation: congeniality without binding obligation, a durable affection which is wholly voluntary. God no longer is bound to respond with compassion to his wayward bride. Yet he does so, all the same! From an example such as this, one can detect that the author employs the pick-axes of scholarship to mine rich gems from the text.

Whom will this work benefit? Certainly those will find value in Renkema's work who have an interest in discovering the high level of sophistication of which biblical poets were capable. In addition, any who value a slow-read of this pathos-filled portion of the Bible will discover rich insights surrounding the grief and resurging hope experienced by this poet-pilgrim of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. If possible, bring with you a bit of Hebrew (and German) ability to your reading of the commentary. Though not requisite, it will help.

Paul Overland

Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 1-24* (The New International Commentary on the Old Testament). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997.

Daniel Block's massive commentary will become a standard for Ezekiel studies for years to come. The commentary draws together the best insights of the two great Ezekiel commentators, Moshe Greenberg and Walther Zimmerli, and then moves beyond them. In the tradition of Greenberg, Block emphasizes the literary unity and artistry of Ezekiel. In the tradition of Zimmerli, Block leaves no linguistic or theological stone unturned.

Block's approach is guided by four simple questions, behind which lies a maze of potential complexity: "(1) Ezekiel, what are you saying? (the text-critical issue); (2) Ezekiel, why do you say it like that? (the cultural and literary issue); (3) Ezekiel, what do you mean? (the hermeneutical and theological issue); (4) Ezekiel, what is the significance of this message for me? (the application issue)" (p. xi).

The commentary on each textual unit begins with Block's translation, along with footnotes on text-critical matters. A second section, "Nature and Design," includes discussion of style, structure and literary context, followed by verse by verse exposition. A third section, "Theological Implications," summarizes "the permanent theological lessons of the unit" (p. xii).



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The commentary's chief strength is its attention to detail. One finds, e.g., two pages on the Tammuz cult (8:14-15); identification of the divination techniques "belomancy or rhabdomancy" (21:26 [ET 21:21]); and citation of extrabiblical texts that describe the departure of the god from its temple as a prelude to foreign invasion (275-76).

Having said that, readers should not be deterred by the many details. One can easily dip into the commentary at any point and discover a nugget. The commentary both presents a thorough exposition of the text, and offers a clear restatement of Ezekiel's theological vision. Block does not hesitate to allow Ezekiel's challenges of Jerusalem's theological certainties also to address, and destabilize, some of our own theological and ideological "certainties."

Criticism of this commentary will seem like grasping at straws. Rather, two observations will suffice. The first pertains to how Block integrates the literary structure of composite texts with theological reflections on entire units. Consider the treatment of chapters 8-11. Although Block concedes that these chapters are composite, including, e.g., two unrelated oracles that are clearly editorial insertions (11:1-13; 11:14-21), he argues for the "literary cohesion" of chapters 8-11. Accordingly, the "Theological Implications" of the temple vision of chapters 8-11 occurs at the end of the entire unit, after the editorial framing of the entire unit in 11:22-25. The two "relatively independent" literary units (11:1-13; 11:14-21) lead Block to include two sections of "Theological Implications" prior to the "Theological Implications" section for chapters 8-11. Thus, although the entire unit has a logical coherence, as argued well on pp. 342-45, the theological implications of chapters 8-11 must be sought in three different places (pp. 340, 355, 359). The impact of Ezekiel's editorial art would have been enhanced had the "Theological Implications" of chapters 8-11 also presented an integrated theological reading of the entire unit. The only significant theological reflection on the editorial insertion of 11:14-21 occurs in an earlier section, which indicates that these verses represent "a promissory note of restoration" even before the judgment has come to completion, a kind of "light at the end of the tunnel" (p. 356).

The second observation concerns how the commentary allows the shocking dimensions of Ezekiel's words and actions to impinge on the "Theological Implications" of the text. The strength of the commentary is its consistent laying bare "The Enduring Theology of Ezekiel" (47). Because of this commitment to a "permanent theological message" (355), Block seems, at times, reluctant to engage in dispute or even in conversation with Ezekiel. When Ezekiel seems too strange or offers excessively violent imagery, Block seeks, rather than to offer resistance, to explain why we ought not consider the language offensive. Although it is clear that "No one presses the margins of literary propriety as severely as Ezekiel" (466), there seems often to be an explanation that softens the severity. Three examples follow that illustrate the complexity and the ambiguity inherent in wrestling with Ezekiel's troubling texts.

First, the commentary on 4:1-5:17 notes that we may be "offended by the sheer terror of Yahweh's pronouncements," and then suggests that we not allow our reactions to "detract from the profoundly theological nature of the message" (216). The value of shocking the audience has been blunted.

Second, in the Excursus on "The Offense of Ezekiel's Gospel" (467) Block examines and explains the objectionable images of sexual violence in chapter 16.

Defending Ezekiel against all charges of inappropriate language and violent imagery, Block suggests we not impose "anachronistic agendas arising out of alien cultural contexts" (469). Rather, it is "The intensity of the divine passion [that] determined the unique and often shocking style of the prophet" (470). In the "Theological Implications" that follow (520-22), Block allows for no arrogance or smugness in those who claim to be people of God today. The equivalent "shock value" today is not, however, suggested. Could we not imagine the story in reverse? God's people are the abusive or unreliable and absent father.

Third, the "Theological Implications" of chapter 23 helpfully notes that the people of God are "vulnerable to the seductive appeal of other allegiances" (764). But these implications do not at the same time address the problem of *militarism* as Israel's root problem. The text becomes an occasion, instead, for noting the destructiveness of marital infidelity.

A commentary as massive as this one that advocates profoundly at every turn *for* Ezekiel and his God, and *against* our own biases, complicity with evil, and idolatries, deserves our deepest respect. Although the commentary will be most useful for those who know Hebrew, its riches are not at all inaccessible to the reader who is looking for consistent theological reflection on one of the most difficult of Biblical books.

Gordon H. Matties, Concord College, Winnipeg

Ehud Ben Zvi. *Micah*. The Forms of the Old Testament Literature. Volume XXIB. Grand Rapids, Cambridge: Eerdmans.

Ehud Ben Zvi's commentary is not for wimps! It forms part of a 24 volume commentary series which aims to present form-critical analyses of every book of the Hebrew Bible "according to a standard outline and methodology". Primarily exegetical in nature these commentaries are seeking to bring consistency to the form-critical terminology and present an exegetical procedure that will enable both students and pastors to participate in analysis and interpretation themselves. The intended audience is a broad one, namely anyone engaged in biblical interpretation.

Each phase of the commentary begins with a structural analysis followed by an exceedingly close inspection/examination of the textual material. Minuscule attention is paid to formulaic literary structures, the grist to Ben Zvi's mill, and in conversation with a massive array of biblical critics, Ben Zvi includes references to reader-response criticism and intertextual criticism in order to broaden the cultural perspective of the texts. His analysis of the superscription is a case in point. Ben Zvi suggests that prophecy was intended for a reading audience and furthermore it was to be reread, studied and meditated upon. Inherent within this concept is the idea that the text was a product of a number of activities - writing, composition, editing, copying, distribution and archiving - all of which required particular economic resources. At this point Ben Zvi considers the ideological and theological purposes of these writings, the exclusivity of literacy, the role of power relations within the reading communities and the appropriation of texts by particular communities within society. He also suggests that "rereaders, and particularly those who meditate on the text, are aware of the entire text even as they reread its first line. They may make connections between different units not

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only according to their sequence in the book but in multidirectional and cross-linked paths".

The analysis of each section ends with a staggering bibliography and for these alone the commentary is well worth some attention. Ben Zvi is obviously a prodigious reader! But the commentary costs \$35, so it can safely be asserted that students will find this tome a luxury outside the scope of their meager pocketbooks. Indeed, I suspect that this commentary will grace libraries and be purchased by an interested/participating clientele, but Ben Zvi's royalties may be limited! Thus, I am led to conclude that even though this is a worthy commentary the product is appealing to an exclusive minority despite the intentions of the contributors. Interesting, eh? Dorothy Penny-Larter

John J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (The Old Testament Library; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1997. xii + 275 pp. Cloth.

John Collins, perhaps best known for his scholarly works on apocalypticism in general and Daniel in particular, here offers a rich and first-rate introduction to Jewish Wisdom texts from the intertestamental period and their historical, social, and cultural settings. The book begins with a discussion of the canonical wisdom literature as the traditional groundwork upon which the featured texts will build and to which they respond. The remainder of the book is divided into two parts: "Hebrew Wisdom" and "Wisdom in the Hellenistic Diaspora." The fullest treatment is accorded the Wisdom of Ben Sira, which is appropriate given its length and its importance for later generations of synagogue and church. Chapter Two introduces the reader to the historical setting of Ben Sira, exploring the cultural and political tensions in Judea a generation before the radical Hellenization Crisis and the Maccabean Revolt. A third chapter details the ways in which Ben Sira links Wisdom and its attainment with the doing of God's Law, the Torah, and keeping reverence for the God of Israel at the center of one's life. Chapter Four surveys the plethora of ethical topics and social situations treated in Ben Sira's curriculum. Chapter Five details Ben Sira's engagement of questions of theodicy. Finally, Chapter Seven examines Ben Sira's treatment of the history of Israel in the "Hymn to the Ancestors" (chapters 44-50) and his eschatological expectations. The final chapter in Part One examines the contributions of several of the Dead Sea Scrolls to our appreciation of Wisdom in Israel during the intertestamental period.

The second part opens with a fine treatment of the circumstances of, and the challenges facing, Diaspora Jews. Chapter Nine surveys the ethical teachings of the "Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides," a text appropriately called "Jewish Ethics in Hellenistic Dress," since the form and, for the most part, the content of this text is not exclusively Jewish. Chapters Ten and Eleven focus on the Wisdom of Solomon, another of the Old Testament Apocrypha. After setting the text in its historical context, Collins first examines the importance of the belief in immortality for the author in his program of encouraging his hearers to pursue virtue and remain loyal to God's ways. Chapter Eleven explores the points of connection between Wisdom of Solomon and Greco-Roman philosophical teachings about God, the universe, and their interconnections, and then explores the author's critique of idolatrous religion, his treatment of Wisdom's actions in the history of Israel, and the vexing issue of universalism and particularism



in this text. A final chapter synthesizes the findings of the whole book, showing the development of the Jewish Wisdom tradition from Ben Sira through Wisdom of Solomon under the growing influence of apocalypticism and Hellenistic philosophy.

Since the genre of review invites critique, I would take issue with Dr. Collins's labeling of the Golden Rule as the "centerpiece of New Testament ethics" (p. 76). Although perhaps the best known piece of ethical teaching in the New Testament, the ethics of the New Testament seems rather to be built around the imitation of Jesus: "do unto others as Christ did for you." I offer this criticism as a tribute to Collins's volume, for I cannot otherwise take issue with, nor point out deficiencies elsewhere in, his masterful treatment of the subject. I highly recommend it for students of Old Testament and early Jewish Wisdom, and for students of New Testament Background.

David A. deSilva

Peter Enns, *Exodus Retold: Ancient Exegesis of the Departure from Egypt in Wis 10:15-21 and 19:1-9*. Harvard Semitic Museum Monographs 57; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997. ix. + 204 pp. \$29.95.

The study of how early Jews and Christian read and interpreted their Scriptures is of perennial interest and importance. This revision of a doctoral dissertation, conducted under James Kugel (himself well known for his work on early exegesis of Scripture, as in his recent book *The Bible as It Was*), provides a thorough and careful analysis of the ways in which the Exodus story is developed in two specific passages in Wisdom of Solomon, itself largely a midrash on Exodus and other episodes from the wilderness wandering (at least in chapters 11-19). Enns shows how the details introduced by pseudo-Solomon are often the result of a close reading of other passages of Scripture that touch on the Exodus event, and that they have parallels throughout intertestamental and early rabbinic literature, showing them to be part of the Jewish cultural store of knowledge about the Exodus event. At certain points, however, Enns is able to discern and highlight pseudo-Solomon's own exegetical tendencies. As a study of intertexture and tradition analysis, this monograph stands as an exemplary model.

David A. deSilva

Jan Willem van Henten, *The Maccabean Martyrs as Saviours of the Jewish People: A Study of 2 & 4 Maccabees* (Leiden: Brill, 1997). xi + 346 pp. \$144 (cloth).

This is a mature work by a scholar who has distinguished himself in the study of early Jewish and Christian martyrology, and most specifically in the study of 4 Maccabees. In this volume, van Henten explores the contributions of those who are remembered as martyrs and heroes of the Jewish people during the repression instigated under Antiochus IV, who chose death with honor rather than life with disobedience.

Van Henten first provides an introduction to each of the major sources for the Maccabean era martyrs, namely 2 and 4 Maccabees, in which the foundational work of his earlier articles is plain to see in full fruition. After a chapter in which he examines the historical setting of the martyrdoms, he explores the meaningfulness and motivations

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of the martyrdoms as expressions of complete faithfulness to God expressed through the strict observance of God's commandments. He then examines the political and patriotic dimensions of the martyrdoms, by which a few individuals become shining models of resistance, calling their nation to rally around the values that are worth dying for. A final chapter exploring the martyrologies as expressions of Jewish philosophy is followed by a summary.

This is an important work in the field of the study of 2 and 4 Maccabees, bringing together much of the scholarly conversation already extant and advancing that conversation in useful ways (for example, van Henten's conclusions about the provenance of 4 Maccabees, which are indeed strong, and his emphasis on the political aspects and results of the martyrdoms).

David A. deSilva

Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg, and Neva Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000). 439 pp. \$40.00 hardcover.

An analytical lexicon provides two valuable kinds of help for the beginning reader of the Greek New Testament. First, it is a lexicon, a dictionary of Greek words with their range of English meanings. In this regard, the present volume serves about as well as any basic lexicon, although it should not replace one's reliance on the more in-depth and standard lexica such as the *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* by Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, now in its third, revised edition. Second, it is a complete parsing guide to every form of every word that appears in the Greek New Testament. In this regard, the present volume does an exceptional job in terms of including not only the critical text of both the UBS and Nestle-Aland Greek New Testaments (taking into account multiple editions of each, no less), but also the standard editions of the Majority Text as well as the host of variants to be found in the critical apparatus of these various editions of the Greek New Testament.

The one potential drawback of the volume is that the grammatical tags are based on an abbreviation scheme that, while it has the benefit of being concise, is not always obvious. The compilers allowed only single-letter abbreviations, with the result that "R" is the abbreviation for the Perfect tense (since "P" was already claimed for the Present tense), and "O" the abbreviation for a Passive Dependent verb.

Since the grammatical tags are the main feature of, and reason for consulting, an analytical lexicon, an example of the system is in order here. The full grammatical tag of *egenometha* would be VIAD--IP. The user will then look to the guide of abbreviations. The first letter indicates part of speech (V=Verb; there are seven different parts of speech in the key). The user will then move to the specific block of symbols for Verbs and proceed: I=Indicative; A=Active; D=Middle Dependent; the two dashes indicate two columns of abbreviations skipped (those reserved for participles, showing case and gender); IP= 1<sup>st</sup> person plural. It will take some time, therefore, for the user of this volume to become familiar with the grammatical tagging system, keeping the abbreviation and symbol key close at hand for a good many hours of use, but once the system is memorized through use it would serve as well as any other system. One benefit of the grammatical tags to be found in this volume is that they provide more

grammatical information for adjectives, the definite article, conjunctions, and particles than would be found in other analytical lexica. The analysis also lists all the possible parsings of a particular form (since it will often happen that a particular string of Greek letters could be construed as two, three, or even four different forms).

This reference tool concludes with an interesting essay on deponency written by Neva Miller. She suggests that the verbs that grammarians tend to classify as "deponent" (middle form with active meaning) all fall within categories that would be well suited to the Greek middle in and of itself — verbs involving reciprocal interaction between subject and object, reflexive action, self-involvement, self-interest, and the like. This provides at least one plausible way of making sense of a concept with which beginning Greek students tend to struggle.

David A. deSilva

Daniel B. Wallace, *The Basics of New Testament Syntax* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000). 334 pp. \$29.99 hardcover.

This volume is a welcome abridgement of Dr Wallace's massive *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996). The earlier volume has received deserved accolades as an up-to-date reference grammar, and included hundreds of discussions of specific New Testament texts introduced under the appropriate grammatical or syntactical headings. Those discussions are largely absent from the abridged volume, as are the sectional bibliographies. The *Basics of New Testament Syntax* volume, however, is keyed to the larger reference work. If one acquires both, therefore, one can use the shorter volume as a handy reference and consult the longer work for specific discussions of passages where one wishes even more detailed information or examples of how the grammatical or syntactic category might affect one's understanding of the text.

The *Basics* will serve the pastor or other student of the Bible who wishes to continue to grow in his or her mastery of Greek, providing a well-organized and fairly comprehensive guide to all the nuances of, say, the Aorist tense or the Subjunctive mood or the dative case that were not included in the first-year introductory language course. Indeed, a book such as Wallace's *Basics* provides an essential second tier in one's grasp of the highly nuanced language of the New Testament, without which one's exegetical abilities would be measurably diminished. For example, the beginning Greek student leaves Greek II with a basic awareness that the genitive case indicates description, one important kind of description being possession. Wallace offers, however, a twenty-page discussion of the twenty-four identifiable nuances that a noun in the genitive case could convey. As the student of the Word encounters, therefore, a noun in the genitive case that does not immediately appear to provide description or denote possession, he or she can turn to Wallace's work for a guide to all the possibilities, so that he or she might discern the precise nuance a New Testament author might be seeking to convey.

I would therefore highly recommend this text as a necessary resource for all who wish to continue to grow in their study of the New Testament in its original language.

David A. deSilva



Paul Barnett, *Jesus & the Rise of Early Christianity: A History of New Testament Times*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999. Pp. 448, \$29.99.

In a self consciously evangelical approach to New Testament background, Barnett describes his goal as "to show that Jesus himself is the 'engine' that drives the story of the New Testament. In other words, this book arose from the long-held conviction that the 'Christ of faith' was one and the same as the 'Jesus of history'" (p. 10). Barnett assumes the essential historicity of the gospels, and that the traditions they contain, were transmitted not orally but in written form through earlier documents or reminiscences. The historicity of Acts is assumed (see pp. 231-326), as is the so-called "South Galatian" hypothesis for Paul's letter to the Galatians (pp. 292-296). Pseudonymity in the New Testament is rejected.

Barnett's strongest contributions are in the discussion of the background of the gospels. He is reluctant, however, to observe the importance of the role of oral tradition in framing the forms of gospel narrative. His discussion of the gospels as "bioi" or, Hellenistic "lives," however, is in keeping with some of the recent research, which recognizes that the gospels would fit into a coherent genre of ancient literature. His discussion of the background of 1<sup>st</sup> Century Palestine is most helpful, demonstrating thorough familiarity with both primary sources and secondary literature.

Barnett's understanding of Acts and the epistolary literature, however, is not as strong or helpful. Little appeal is made to archaeological findings. Also, he tends to rely upon rather questionable hypotheses, such as those found in John A.T. Robinson's *Redating the New Testament*, which present unconvincing arguments for accepting either Peterine authorship of 1 or 2 Peter (see p. 325, n. 9) or an early date of Hebrews (see p. 374, n. 22).

Barnett accepts the so-called "South Galatian" hypothesis for dating Galatians as Paul's earliest letter, written before the Apostolic Council of Acts 15, continuing the tradition of British evangelical New Testament scholarship since Ramsey. The reader should be warned, however, that considerable evidence exists against the hypothesis (see the introduction of H. D. Betz, *Galatians* [Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979]). Barnett draws this conclusion because he presupposes the basic reliability of Acts, as well as its traditional authorship by Luke, the physician and companion of Paul. While this may be acceptable in many circles, readers need to be aware that this position is by no means the universal consensus.

Perhaps Barnett is most helpful when he demonstrates that the most likely explanation for early Christianity's ascription of messianic status to the person of Jesus of Nazareth is that such messianic consciousness derives from Jesus himself, and was confirmed by his resurrection from the dead. The use of Johannine chronology to inform and supplement the portrayal of Jesus' ministry in the Synoptics has found support in J.P. Meier's *A Marginal Jew*, although, surprisingly, that book is seldom cited.

Despite some of the shortcomings, the book is well documented, with good bibliographies at the end of each chapter as well as extended notes and helpful maps. While discussion of critical theories is sometimes neglected in the text, such issues are acknowledged in the notes. There are also numerous excurses, one of the most helpful being "Excursus 20a" (pp. 420-421), which describes some of the inadequacies of Crossan's work on Christianity in the 40's and 50's (*Birth of Christianity: What*

*Happened in the Years After the Execution of Jesus*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1998).

In short, Barnett's work can be used with profit in an evangelical setting among undergraduates or in lay Bible studies. While it should not be taken as the only, or indeed last word, it does provide balance to some of the more extreme claims of groups, such as The Jesus Seminar, that are propagated in the popular media. It does demonstrate that one can have both a historical consciousness as well as a vital evangelical faith.

Russell Morton

Craig L. Blomberg, *Neither Poverty nor Riches: A Biblical Theology of Material Possessions*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999, pp. 253, \$20.00.

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:25). Anyone in the Church of North America who takes Jesus at his word and, at the same time, takes an honest look at the economic conditions of the rest of the world, should be disturbed by what troubled the disciples that day: If this is true, which of *us* can hope to be saved? Can we count ourselves as blessed of God, a land flowing with milk and honey because we have found favor in the eyes of the Lord? Or are we a country full of rich fools, living in luxury every day while a billion beggars lie at our gates?

In *Neither Poverty nor Riches: A Biblical Theology of Material Possessions*, Craig L. Blomberg navigates skillfully through difficult passages of Scripture, avoids the dangerous obstructions of social convention and unquestioned politico-economic loyalty, and anchors his work safely in the harbor of sound biblical exegesis. The current debate over the biblical perspective of material possessions rages from the impractical position of extreme asceticism to the ludicrous and self-serving tenets of the "health and welfare gospel." Blomberg proceeds inductively, not dismissing any perspective outright, but allowing the voice of Scripture to address the viability of each position, even the most unlikely. I share D. A. Carson's assessment that, "Dr. Blomberg's volume is an extraordinary achievement. . . that is, quite frankly, the best one on the subject" (p. 9).

Blomberg's aim is to establish a comprehensive theology of material possessions by surveying the contributions of *all* major biblical witnesses on the subject. While most recent authors on the subject focus entirely on the New Testament, Blomberg examines the entire corpora of Scripture giving remarkable consideration to the interconnectedness between Old and New Testament perspectives regarding material possessions. He even offers the reader a functional glimpse at the intertestamental writings on the topic. He does not presuppose a certain amount of thematic unity, but allows Scripture to present its own rich, theological suggestions. He does, however, pull together significant implications at the end of each chapter, and summarizes these at the end of the book, drawing conclusions about Scriptural themes and offering practical applications of these themes for believers.

Blomberg scrupulously follows the guidelines of hermeneutical principals as set forth by Klein, Blomberg and Hubbard (*Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*,

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1993) paying meticulous attention to historical background. He carefully contextualizes each verse by relating situation-specific mandates to broader, ethical principals. For example, in his treatment of Jesus' sermon on the mount, Blomberg gives social background information which indicates that "give to anyone who asks of you" refers to the Jewish practice of loans without interest, rather than giving money to anyone who begs from you (pp. 129,130). Similarly, he refutes those who would say that Jesus accepts the inevitability of poverty when he said, "The poor you will always have with you." According to Blomberg, those who heard Jesus would have clearly understood this as an invitation to be vigilant in their efforts to take care of the poor among them (p. 142).

My one caveat to Blomberg's survey is in his analysis of Jesus' parables. He suggests that the parables have meaning on two levels—one spiritual and the other material—which, in my opinion, stretches what Jesus intended. Jesus knew that his listeners would easily identify with stories about earning a day's wage, about rich people and poor people, about debt and other financial images. These were issues of daily living. As with his parables about farming and shepherding, Jesus used finances and material possessions merely as a backdrop upon which to paint portraits of spiritual truth. Obviously, financial issues are one of many areas which will be affected by following the precepts put forth in the parables, but most of the parables which mention money or material possessions are not categorically addressing finances—at any level.

Dr. Blomberg incontestably accomplishes his objective: a comprehensive biblical theology of material possessions. As the title suggests, Scripture qualifies neither wealth nor poverty as a virtue. Neither one are prerequisite to righteousness, nor the result of righteous living. Nor are they inherently evil. Blomberg's survey convincingly establishes that God's continuing concern is our dependence upon him for our "daily bread." In the same way, if God's will is to be done on earth as it is in heaven, there must be an intentional interdependence between all of God's children. If you find yourself asking the question, "Is that really possible?" then this book is a must read for you. The answer is clearly laid out in Scripture, and Blomberg has done the work of distilling it for us.

Eric P. Sandberg

Henry J. Cadbury, *The Making of Luke-Acts* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999). xx + 385 pp. Paper.

Hendrickson has made the reprinting of enduring classics in biblical scholarship a noteworthy part of its publishing program. This volume is a reprint of the 1927 work by Henry Cadbury, an English scholar whose work on the composition of Luke-Acts is still foundational for the study of these texts.

Cadbury begins with a study of the transmission of Jesus materials in the early church and an assessment of Luke's use of sources (Mark and Q). In a second section, he analyzes the literary forms of the material found in Luke-Acts, including a careful comparison of Luke and Josephus on the use of earlier historical source material. The book concludes with a thorough investigation of the style, social location, theological interests, and purposes of the author in composing Luke-Acts. Thus in a single volume,



the reader has access to a landmark work on the source criticism, form criticism, and redaction criticism of Luke-Acts.

The reprint of the original is prefaced with an introduction by Paul Anderson in which Cadbury's enduring contribution to Lucan scholarship is evaluated appreciatively, as is appropriate.

David A. deSilva

Mal Couch, ed., *A Bible Handbook to the Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1999). 455 pp, \$25.99.

This book seems to "revitalize a sense of urgency and mission" in Bible teachers, missionaries and pastors (p. 7). It presents the theology and a background survey of the Acts of the Apostles. The perspective is avowedly Dispensationalist, and the purpose is to present Acts from a Dispensationalist perspective. The book has three parts. Part one provides an overview of the theology of Acts. Part two focuses on the theology and work of the Holy Spirit in Acts. Part three provides a "Verse-by-Verse Background Guide" to Acts.

The Dispensationalist element shows up throughout the whole work, determining the topics treated in parts one and two. For example, the work goes to great lengths to show how unbiblical "covenant theology" is, and show the "Dispensationalist purposes" of Acts (p. 24). Many topics in part one, such as the ministry of the Holy Spirit, while referring to texts in Acts, are described with references to many other biblical books, especially Paul's letters. On this topic in particular, the book emphasizes that the historical events in Acts are not normative and should not be used in determining theology or praxis for today's Church. This leads to discussions of the nature of speaking in tongues and of all "signs and wonders" by A.D. 70. These phenomena only occurred during the transition between the dispensation of law and the dispensation of the Church. While these topics may be appropriate in some contexts, the question must be asked, Are these issues actually part of the theology of Acts? Does Acts intend to address such issues? This is not to say that all the chapters cover such topics. Chapter seven examines the place of the temple in Acts. Here again, however, the book focuses on what Acts says about the temple in Jerusalem in relation to Dispensationalism, stating that "the supposed abandonment of the temple by the early Church" is an argument against dispensational interpretation (p. 109).

In part three, the book steps through Acts by the chronological divisions, from Chapter 1, "The Wait for the Coming of the Holy Spirit," dated to A.D. 30, which covers Acts 1, to chapter 28, "Paul's Arrival at Rome," dated to A.D. 59. Each chapter begins with a synopsis of the chapter, followed by explanations of items of interest in the chapter. For example, for Acts 20:2, there is a one-and-one-half page description of Greece, followed by a discussion of the individuals named in Acts 20:4, such as Tychicus. Often, items in part three refer back to earlier parts of the book, for example on Acts 24:2b, "the Holy Spirit said, "the entry points readers back to the discussion of the personality of the Holy Spirit in part one. Part three will likely be the most valuable section of the books for readers seeking to understand Acts better.

Overall, this book will be disappointing to anyone who is not committed to Dispensational theology, since the book presents Dispensationalism as clearly taught

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within Acts. The book does refer to various scholars, but generally these are quite dated works, such as Lenski's commentary on Acts, or to various Bible dictionaries. There are occasional references to more recent works, but little evidence of dialogue with recent works on Acts. For instance, there is a discussion of the meaning of Joel 2:28-32 in Acts 2 in which the book lists three possible interpretations, none of which correlate to either the views of M. Rese, or, more relevantly, that of M. Turner (*Power from on High: The Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996)), for example. Even if one has a Dispensationalist perspective and this reviewer is not seeking to impugn that view, they will likely find this work inadequate for understanding Acts. Any number of recent commentaries on Acts, aimed similarly at pastors and lay people, would be more helpful in understanding the book of Acts, such as those by I. H. Marshall or L. T. Johnson.

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David Crump, *Jesus the Intercessor: Prayer and Christology in Luke-Acts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1999. Xviii+295 pp., \$29.95. ISBN: 0801022215.

While there are many books on prayer, Crump argues that there has been relatively little scholarly work on prayer within Luke-Acts. While earlier research has focused on Jesus as a "model pray-er," Crump focuses on the christological significance of Jesus' prayer life, what it teaches about his ministry and about his relationship with God. Crump examines the nature of Jesus' prayer life in Luke's Gospel and its role in the presentation of christology in the book of Acts. Jesus' intercessory prayers play an important role in the christology of Luke-Acts. Jesus' intercession, both in his earthly life and in heaven, are at the heart of Jesus' past and present role as savior. Crump examines Luke's editorial notices of Jesus' prayer-life, correlating them with the recorded contents of Jesus' prayers. Next Crump compares Jesus' prayer life to didactic material on prayer in Luke-Acts. This is followed by a comparison of Jesus as the heavenly intercessor in Acts with notions of heavenly intercession in ancient Judaism.

Crump states that "Luke associates the prayers of Jesus with the acquisition of spiritual insight at key locations throughout his gospel (p. 21). Several texts show prayer providing insight to others of Jesus' character: Peter's confession (Luke 9:18-27), the Transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36), the Crucifixion account (Luke 23:32-49) and possibly the trip to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13-35). Crump treats each of these texts in order to show that "Luke presents Jesus primarily, though not exclusively, as an Intercessor" whose prayers for the disciples result in what is necessary for them to be obedient, successful disciples (p. 21). For example, Peter's confession of Jesus as the "Christ of God" came only through Jesus' intercessory prayers. While there may well be an association between Jesus' prayer and the disciples' question in Luke 9:18, is it really valid to infer that Luke intends his readers to understand Jesus' prayer as directed at the disciples correctly answering his question to them about his messianic identity (p. 24)?

Crump connects Luke's language about seeing and hearing in Luke-Acts to Jesus' prayers. Jesus prays that his followers will see and hear him correctly. Jesus' prayer life also plays an important role in the Transfiguration, according to Crump. In

the Transfiguration, the praying Jesus is related to the disciples' "reception of a new revelation into the true meaning of Jesus' person and ministry (p. 48).

Crump argues that Jesus in Luke 10:21-24 thanks the Father for hearing and answering his prayers in Luke 9 for the disciples. After reviewing theories regarding the referent of "these things" in Jesus' prayer, Crump argues that "these things" are connected to the mission of the seventy described earlier in Luke 10. The content of "these things" is the identity of Jesus as the "messianic Son of God." This passage also shows that Jesus' role as intercessory mediator was already operative during his earthly mission.

Chapter four focuses on the other two narratives in Luke's gospel which show Jesus' prayers as the means by which an individual received special illumination regarding the person of Jesus. Crump probes how Luke 23:32-49 contributes to Luke's use of prayer for christology. Jesus' prayer in Luke 23:34 is closely connected with the thief's request of Jesus. Jesus' prayer thus provided the means for revelation to the thief of Jesus' true nature. In Luke 23:44-49, the language of seeing/hearing in the response of the crowd and the centurion "shows itself to be exemplary of the response required to God's revelation (p. 91)." In the prayer-revelation equation used by Luke, perceiving Jesus' true identity leads to salvation. Through his self-disclosure, Jesus' prayers mediate God's salvation. Crump finds a similar connection in the story of the Emmaus Road, Luke 24:13-35. Based on Jewish practices of "breaking bread," Crump asserts that Jesus prayed as he broke bread. This prayer precedes the disciples recognizing Jesus. Through this recognition, they are able to understand the Scriptures (and not the reverse. They receive revelation, not that their prophetic understanding of the messiah needs to be clarified to see "the messiah must be the final, suffering prophet (p. 106)." Once again, Jesus' prayer is seen to play a revelatory role.

Crump examines Luke 22:31-32, which is the only place in Luke-Acts where Jesus makes known to the disciples the contents of his prayer for them and points to its answer in the future. Jesus the pray-er is clearly paradigmatic in Luke 22. Jesus stands against temptation through prayer, while the disciples fail through lack of prayer. Since the disciples after this event needed perseverance, as later disciples do, this text helps show that Jesus' intercession continues on past his death and resurrection. Crump draws from this the suggestion that Jesus' intercession is responsible for the composition of the Church. People are included through Jesus' prayers. One must ask, however, Does Judas' absence in Luke 22:31-32 mean that Jesus did not pray for him? Does Luke 22:3 really show that Jesus' prayers determine the composition of the Church over time?

Turning to Acts, Crump argues that Stephen's vision of the Son of Man in Acts 7:55-56 is the one place in Acts which shows Jesus as the final prophet praying for his people. It shows Jesus as an advocate for Stephen. While this is suggestive, Crump does not provide a substantial enough bridge to get from Jesus as Stephen's advocate to Jesus praying for Stephen. The picture in Acts of Jesus as the final, eschatological Prophet fulfilling the role of heavenly intercessor is consistent, according to Crump, with the idea expressed in many Jewish works from the intertestamental period of human beings who interceded while on earth and now continue that in heaven. Yet, "perhaps Luke's most innovative contribution to NT christology is his presentation of a praying Messiah (p. 235)."



## Book Reviews

Overall, Crump's work makes many helpful observations, but his argument, while cautious, is also unconvincing. The arguments are generally based on possible hints in the text, but these are carried forward to assertions that go beyond the evidence. Still, the book raises many important questions and will reward critical readers.

Kenneth Litwak

Jay M Harrington, *The Lukan Passion Narrative. The Markan Material in Luke 22,54-23,25: A Historical Survey: 1891-1997*. Leiden: Brill, 2000. (New Testament Tools and Studies, XXX) xiii+1003pp., \$206.

The huge size of this volume says much about both the nature and volume of New Testament scholarship and the industry of its author. Harrington begins with the observation that the volume of scholarship devoted to the question of whether Luke followed a special source or sources in composing his passion narrative has led some to consider that an impasse has been reached. In his introduction Harrington makes no explicit claim to move beyond such an impasse in this history of scholarship on the question, although his own sympathies are with those who reject any special source.

The history that Harrington presents is thorough and comprehensive. Few may wish to read the book in its entirety, but a detailed table of contents and a useful index of authors make it possible for the reader easily to locate discussions and summaries of particular contributors to the debate. The overall structure of the survey is chronological, although Harrington has grouped scholars according to whether or not they support the hypothesis of a special source. This offers more coherence than would be found in a purely chronological account. Harrington offers a synthesis of the evidence for a special source on pages 564-5, and for Lukan redaction of Mark on pages 685-6. He attaches great significance to his observation that some scholars who once advocated Luke's use of a special source changed their position.

One important criterion in assessing a work such as this is the question of whether it represents fairly those whom it surveys. Two observations might be made about some of those whom Harrington names as having changed their minds. First, it seems unfair to cite R E Brown as an important example of someone who has changed his mind. Harrington notes that Brown himself observes that he supported a special source only before he considered the question in detail. Therefore although Brown is an important advocate of Harrington's thesis that Luke drew primarily on Mark, he is not truly representative of those who have come to this position after having defended the opposite view. Second, Harrington observes (correctly) that J B Green makes no further mention of his 1987 defence of a special source (*The Death of Jesus*) in his subsequent treatment of Luke's theology (*The Theology of Luke*, 1995) and his commentary on Luke (*Luke*, NICNT, 1997), but this is not sufficient grounds on which to infer that therefore he has changed his mind. Indeed, Green confirmed to this reviewer by e-mail that he has not. Harrington may be correct to suggest that a majority of recent scholarship does not argue that Luke drew on a special source independent of Mark, but his argument based on those who are said to have changed their position is overstated. Such observations are important in that they serve as a reminder that there is no such thing as impartial

scholarship, but nevertheless this work is an invaluable summary of previous research regardless of whether or not Harrington's conclusions are considered compelling.

Harrington's final section is devoted to the Herod pericope, Luke 23:6-16, one of the most debated sections of the Lukan passion narrative. He notes nine categories in which source-critical opinion on this passage may be arranged and then offers his own exegesis of the passage. Harrington concludes that no appeal to a special source need be made. Rather, Luke composed the Herod pericope on the basis of Markan materials he omitted in earlier parts of his Gospel parallel to Mark 3:6, 6:14-29 and 15:16-20. Therefore, he claims, his working hypothesis that Luke employed Markan materials that he chose to omit elsewhere may now be regarded as a principle. Further conclusions follow, and these are offered in support of his overall conclusion that Luke is guided by Mark throughout his passion narrative.

A bibliography, three appendices (Special LQ Vocabulary and Construction According to J. Weiss; Theories of Lukan Priority; The Relation of the Herod Pericope to the Gospel of Peter) and an index of authors complete the work.

This is an indispensable tool for further study of the Lukan Passion Narrative in particular, and the relationship between the Synoptic Gospels in general. Its price may confine it only to major research libraries, but it deserves to be used widely.

Andrew Gregory, Lincoln College, Oxford

Ruth Hoppin, *Priscilla's Letter: Finding the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Fort Bragg, CA: Lost Coast Press, 2000. 207 pp. Paper. \$19.95.

The theories about the authorship of Hebrews are well-known. Hoppin seeks to provide substantive support for Harnack's suggestion that the author was Priscilla, known to us from Acts. Writing in a lively style, while carrying on a scholarly conversation, Hoppin argues that, when all the possible authors are considered, and those unsuitable are eliminated, Priscilla appears as the best choice for the author.

Hoppin first explores the lack of an introductory statement which names the author and recipients. She states that there are no known examples from the papyri where this prescript is lacking. Hebrews, which she argues is a letter, is the only known exception. Hoppin then argues that while this could be due to accidental loss, this is unlikely. The evidence suggests that the author omitted the prescript intentionally. Hoppin inquires as to why this might be and suggests that this points in the direction of Hebrews being written by a woman. Otherwise, Hebrews would not have been anonymous. Hoppin next (chapter 3) examines the possible personality of the author, seeking to show that the sympathetic and empathetic nature of the letter suggests it was more likely to be from a woman. Looking at the changes in first person pronouns from "we" to "I" and back again, especially in Heb 13:19, Hoppin argues that the most natural way to understand this verse is that "we" is the married couple Priscilla and Aquila, while "I" refers to Priscilla, who requests prayer that she may return to the readers. Because of the affinities with Paul's letters and the mention of Timothy, the author must have come from Paul's inner circle of co-workers. Hoppin argues further that a number of "semi-apologetic pleas for credibility" within Hebrews favor a female author, Priscilla, rather than a male (p. 31). The letter provides "ample evidence for feminine

style and outlook (p.33)." Hebrews 11 shows that the author identified with women. The mention at the end of Hebrews 11 of women who "received their dead back by resurrection" refers to women who were aided by Elijah and Elisha. Hoppin suggests, based on the account of these same events in Sirach 48, that a man would have focused on Elijah and Elisha, not the anonymous women of the stories. In contrast to Sirach's roll call "of famous men" in Sirach 44, Hebrews 11 mentions Sarah and Rahab, two women, by name. Hoppin, following Clement of Rome, argues that Heb 11:34 refers probably to Judith.

Hoppin argues in chapter 5 that none of the other individuals offered for the author by scholars are acceptable. She shows why Apollos, Barnabas, Silas and even "the unknown associate of Paul" do not meet the necessary criteria. For example, while Clement of Rome quotes Hebrews, Clement's own style and that of Hebrews are markedly different. The two letters should be similar stylistically if Clement authored both. The same is true for the author of the Epistle of Barnabas. Barnabas, separate from the author of the Epistle of Barnabas, does not qualify as the author either. First, Barnabas was a Levite, well-versed no doubt in temple procedures. The author of Hebrews speaks only of the tabernacle, not the temple, and appears unfamiliar with ceremonial procedures common to both. Moreover, a Jew from Cyprus would probably not be fluent in Greek and skilled in classical rhetoric, as the author of Hebrews is.

Hoppin then examines the association of Priscilla with Rome, where the letter was likely written. Hoppin discusses archaeological evidence for Priscilla's home and well-to-do family. Priscilla would have had the opportunity for education, to meet Paul, and to meet Philo, whose writings the author of Hebrews seems to know and challenge. Hoppin then seeks to reconcile Priscilla as a educated woman in a politically important wealthy family in Rome with her marriage to Aquila, which is perhaps the weak spot of her argument.

Overall, Hoppin has done a fine job of providing a very plausible case that Priscilla wrote Hebrews. My one critique is that Hoppin rarely cites non-biblical primary sources, leaving it as an exercise for the reader to consult all the scholarly works she cites to find out the primary sources she appeals to at various points. This should not detract, however, from the solid argument Hoppin has presented in favor of Harnack's suggestion, making a formidable case that must be dealt with by any who choose an alternate author.

Kenneth D. Litwak

Luke Timothy Johnson, *Living Jesus: Learning the Heart of the Gospel*, San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1999, ix-210 pp., \$22.00.

Luke Timothy Johnson, the Robert W. Woodruff Professor of New Testament at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University and prodigious critic of the Jesus Seminar moves beyond all that in this book. He sees the New Testament as a step-by-step guide to understanding and developing a relationship with the living Jesus. The Jesus presented by the writers of the New Testament is resurrected and alive, not a dead figure of history to be scrutinized. He says, "Jesus is not simply a figure from the past...but a person in the present; not merely a memory that we can analyze and manipulate, but an agent who can confront and instruct us."



Learning Jesus is then not a historical problem needing resolution but a relationship that must be developed. This is accomplished similarly to the way other intimate relationships develop, that is by openness, trust, respect, attentiveness, over time, suffering and faithfulness.

Johnson affirms that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is key to understanding how he still lives. Thus the resurrection is the grounding for the Christian life for it is the resurrection that aroused the disciples to live for Jesus. This implies that there was a sense among them in which Jesus was present. They were not simply relating to a person that they knew in the past.

These ideas are developed through the traditions of the Canon, Creed and Community. The Canon secures continuity with the past and identity for the future and it is to be appreciated for its diversity and not overly harmonized. Mark sees Jesus as the suffering Son of Man. Matthew emphasizes Jesus as the teacher, Luke sees Jesus as the prophet and John emphasizes that Jesus reveals the Father. The Creed articulates how the early witnesses are to be heard. The character of Jesus remains normative for believers. The Gospels, Acts, Epistles and Revelation reveal how Jesus is embodied in community. It is the Community that demonstrates how Jesus continues to be present today.

The author is making a strong, positive statement of what he believes rather than attacking what he is against.

Richard E. Allison

Andreas J. Köstenberger, *Encountering John*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999. 277 pp. hb.

This is a winner. "Come on in!" the introductory chapter invites. The format, layout, and the contents quickly engage the reader onto the page and into the book. This volume is one in the Encountering Bible Series, intended by Baker for introductory classes at the college or university level. I would have appreciated this introduction to John during my years as a serious lay Bible student, and will certainly add it to my collection as a pastor.

Köstenberger is Associate Professor of NT and Greek at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He presents the Gospel of John from a conservative, evangelical viewpoint: high Christology, high view of scripture, and traditional view of John the son of Zebedee as both the beloved disciple and the author of the gospel. Köstenberger acknowledges and briefly addresses other viewpoints.

The structure of this text is "user-friendly." The two-column format, illustrations, subtitles, sidebars, outlines, study questions, and lists, break up the page, add to the ease of reading, and increase interest in the material. Historical considerations, the setting, context, theology, and major themes of John are addressed in Part 1. Parts 2-5 deal with the text in large chunks: the Prologue, the Seven Signs and Mission to the Jews, the Farewell Addresses and Mission to the World, and the Epilogue. Not a verse by verse commentary, the gospel is discussed clearly and concisely in large pericope.

At the end of the textbook are sections on such controversial issues as the history of interpretation, the quest for historical Jesus, the relationships of the Gospel to

the Epistles and to Revelation. Köstenberger *provides excurses* on various issues: "the Jews," asides, misunderstandings, and *aporias*. A glossary, tools for study, endnotes, bibliography, and scripture index round out the offering of this volume, which will find wide acceptance as recommended for undergraduate Bible classes, and in my opinion will be valued by conservative Bible teachers, both clergy and lay. Jean Van Camp

Stanley E. Porter, *The Paul of Acts - Essays in Literary Criticism, Rhetoric and Theology*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999. WUNT 115. Hardcover, ix + 233 pp., DM 148.

The author describes his work not as a monograph but as a series of studies on the Paul of Acts. Thus the literary studies focus on the depiction of Paul as a character in Luke's narrative. Hence, for example, he examines Pauline speeches not in order to see how they fit into the overall pattern of speeches in Acts but in order to explore the character of Paul the speechgiver in Acts. Porter suggests that this work on the Paul of Acts was a natural progression from his work on the Paul of the letters, but he concludes that the difference between the two is not as great as is often posited.

Porter begins with the *we*-passages, for the question of whether Luke was a companion of Paul affects any understanding of the portrayal of Paul in Acts. Noting that there is no true parallel to the *we*-passages in ancient literature, Porter argues that they are to be understood not as an indication of the participation of Luke in events narrated but rather as an indication of the use of a continuous and coherent source focussing on Paul and his missionary travels. This source probably originates with someone other than Luke, and Porter finds in it four characteristic theological emphases: an understated depiction of divine guidance which sees Paul as one missionary among others; a Hellenistic world-view which sees the Jews as one nation among many; a characterisation of Paul first not as a brilliant orator but as a man of understated competence; and, second, not as a miracle worker or man of magic. Therefore the *we*-source is not a major source of much of Luke's theology, but it does allow him to develop his account of the progress of the gospel and to record Paul's travels before bringing him to Rome.

Porter's discussion of Luke's depiction of the relationship between Paul and the Holy Spirit coheres with this conclusion: only once is there a link between Paul and the Holy Spirit in the *we*-passages, but elsewhere Luke's depiction of a close relationship between Paul and the Holy Spirit is of a piece with his widespread interest in pneumatology.

Porter next turns to the contrast between Luke's depiction of Paul as a rhetorician (who is not recorded as writing letters) and Paul's own testimony to himself as an epistolographer. Porter argues that the summary nature of Paul's speeches in Acts means that it is impossible to analyse them rhetorically as speeches. Therefore he finds no evidence in Acts to consider Paul a rhetorician, anymore than he finds evidence in the letters to consider Paul a rhetorician rather than a letterwriter. The historical Paul may have been a speechmaker, but all that the reader of Acts can analyse rhetorically is the way in which Luke shaped and presented his accounts of Pauline speeches. These speeches Porter considers under the two heads of Missionary and Apologetic speeches.

He finds a number of common traits which distinguish these speeches from others in Acts. This may mean either that they go back to genuine Pauline speeches or that Luke has used them in order to create a Pauline persona. Either way, there is nothing in these speeches that could not come from the Paul of the letters. Thus proposed differences between the natural theology found in Romans 1 and Acts 17 (contra Maddox) are overdrawn.

Porter's discussion of the relationship between Paul and James as seen in Acts 21 is perhaps the most controversial chapter of the book, at least for those who come to Acts with conservative presuppositions. Porter argues that James lures Paul into a trap, and that the Jerusalem church stands passively by as Paul is first attacked by Diaspora Jews and then taken into Roman custody. Thus Paul has been rejected by both Christian and non-Christian Jews by the time he preaches unhindered in Acts.

Just as some scholars will wish to disagree with Porter's assessment of the relationship between James and Paul, so others will disagree with his overall thesis, viz. that there are no irreconcilable differences between the Paul of the letters and the Paul of Acts, and that Acts was written by someone who had close contact with Paul or his beliefs. He notes that the "two-Paul" position of German scholarship has managed to position itself as the consensus view and to push the burden of proof onto those who do not see so great a divide between the Paul of the letters and the Paul of Acts. Yet it is this consensus that Porter seeks to overturn throughout these essays and especially in his final chapter, where he offers a critique of Haenchen and Vielhauer.

Not all will accept Porter's overall traditional conclusions, but this collection offers a significant body of original research which refuses to align itself uncritically with either radical or critical camps of scholars. It opens up new possibilities for interpreting Acts, and it suggests that students of Acts should look forward to Porter's volume on Acts, scheduled (tentatively) to appear in the NIGTC series in 2004.

Andrew Gregory

Peter W. L. Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City: New Testament Perspectives on Jerusalem*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1996. Pp. xiii + 370. \$25

This work is a systematic attempt to show that the coming of Christ drastically altered OT expectations of Jerusalem at the very outset of the formation of the Christian movement. This is true, Walker argues, throughout the NT corpus, with the exception of a very few documents. The unexpected conclusion of Christ as center, as opposed to Zion as center, places Jerusalem as a primary focus within the NT Christological argument, both in the historical context of the NT and the current era. The NT reflects a community/communities coming to grips with failed political assumptions for Jerusalem and an embrace of God's new missional purpose for God's people in Christ. Walker intends to develop a "biblical theology" (xiii) of Jerusalem that is hinged on the NT interpretation of Christ's life, death, and resurrection in their historical context as well as later interpretive efforts in the corpus.

The book is divided into two parts: Landscapes of Jerusalem (Part I) and Jesus and the Church (Part II). By far the weightier portion, Part I is subdivided into seven chapters each related to specific NT documents, chosen neither for chronological nor



canonical order. Rather, Walker chooses texts considered relevant to the discussion, arranged so that the reader alternates "(roughly) between those documents written before 70 and those which were written subsequently" (xiii). Each document is read with respect to its perceived attitudes toward Jerusalem, the Temple, and, in some cases, the Land. Lack of explicit reference to Jerusalem is therefore compensated by perceptions gained from the interrelation of the three. Walker intends that "these discussions provide confirming evidence as to how they would have approached Jerusalem . . ." (xii). The now rejected status of Jerusalem, how much or little that can be related to the life of Jesus or discernment on the part of the NT author, becomes the focus for Walker in his pursuit of a biblical theology in Part II. The NT confronts what is now an age-old question: Is the OT wrong in its prophetic understanding of the future status of Jerusalem? As a result of Christ, NT reinterpretations of the significance of Jerusalem engage this question, coming to terms with the *new* meaning of what it is *to be* Israel, God's people. It is a Jerusalem "desecrated" (287) that must resign itself to no status in the world; it is God's restoring of God's people in Christ that fulfills OT prophecy, called to missional liberation rather than socio-political glorification (292). A biblical theology of Jerusalem is "therefore illegitimate" (313) without the interpretive contexts of the NT for Christian theology. Continuity in biblical revelation is affirmed as long as one is purposeful in acknowledging the reinterpretive efforts of the NT authors in discerning the ongoing purposes of God combined with the discontinuity of Jerusalem's failed future status as the necessary outcome of God's "economy of salvation" (314). Although at times I find myself in negative reaction to Walker's bold assertions that the NT presents a unified front regarding the "destruction of the formal structures of Judaism" (12), I nonetheless found the book as a whole provocative in its application. Walker rightly calls Christians to an unapologetically Christian attitude of repentance as the framework for an appropriate biblical theology, i.e. a theology that necessitates the interpretive lens of the NT with utmost "humility and self-critique" (316). In addition, Walker has effectively shown a unified perception of a changed Jerusalem within the texts under consideration. Whether or not the specific means of each NT document to explain this change produces a unified theological perspective for modern application is not sufficiently clear, if indeed truly possible. The valuable aspect of this work, however, is its assertion that the Christological debate must be acutely aware of its dependence on the notion of a Jerusalem changed.

C. Jason Borders, Brunel University/London Bible College, England

Marion L. Soards. *1 Corinthians*. NIBC: 7: Peabody MA: Hendrickson, 1999. 390 pages, \$11.95 pb.

Marion Soards is NT professor at Louisville Presbyterian and also an ordained minister. His contribution to the New International Biblical Commentary is intended for the non-specialist, although Soards seems to aim for the educated person. Noting this, I would have liked to have seen more interaction with the recent social-scientific and inscriptional studies on Corinth, material which such readers could certainly follow.

This volume offers an introduction followed by a fairly detailed commentary on the text of the NIV. The introduction is altogether brief, and apart from a few

quibbles ("Paul" was a Latin, not a Greek, name; Paul did not engage in Hellenistic allegorical exegesis to the extent Soards implies), the main disappointment is the lack of much description of Corinth or the particular problems of the church in that city. We are assured that Paul wrote the letter to correct certain specific problems, but what those problems were and why they had arisen is scarcely addressed.

Commendably, the commentary proper is focused squarely on the biblical text. Each section is followed by Additional Notes, which develop certain critical points or direct the reader to further literature. The commentary is well-written, if a bit conventional in its insights. Some points are explored sufficiently: for example, he concludes that the virgins of chapter 7 are the fiancées of the addressees, not the virgin daughters of Christian fathers. On the other hand, the recent debate over the meaning of "headship" in 1 Corinthians and Ephesians is barely mentioned, and the conclusions are vague. He implies that in 1 Cor. 12 enthusiasts were minimizing the humanity of Jesus, but we are left wondering in what way.

The bibliography is extensive for a volume of this nature, Soards interacting most often with the works by Fee, Murphy-O'Connor, Conzelmann, Barrett, Orr and Walther and Nigel Watson. He also takes into account recent journal literature.

Given Soards' pastoral background, there is surprisingly little reflection on contemporary application, but this seems to be due to the nature of the series.

I could imagine giving this volume to an educated layperson or non-Christian. It clearly surpasses the similar offering in the Tyndale Commentary by Leon Morris (1958).

Gary S. Shogren, Seminario ESEPA, San Jose, Costa Rica

Paul Barnett. *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997. 696 pages. hb \$45.00.

Paul Barnett's commentary replaces the 1963 NICNT volume by P. E. Hughes. It follows the text of the NIV, with Greek transliterated in the body, but in Greek characters in the footnotes. Barnett was master of Robert Menzies college, and is now the Anglican Bishop of North Sydney in Australia. His field of study is the Roman background of the New Testament. He thus brings both scholarly and pastoral questions to the text, as is evidenced from the chapter called "Pastoral Ministry from Second Corinthians."

While Barnett was unable to use Margaret Thrall's ICC commentary (1994), he interacts extensively with her Cambridge commentaries on 1 and 2 Corinthians (1965), as well as with the 1986 Word commentary by Ralph Martin. The bibliography is fairly thin. Barnett offers superb interaction with Greek and Roman literature (Strabo, Lucian, Epictetus) and rhetorical forms, but very little with the papyri. He includes a nice summary of Paul's relations with Roman Corinth. There is almost no interaction with 1 Clement or any ancient commentary (a strength of Hughes). The lexical background is not as thorough as that given by Martin.

Barnett, like Hughes before him, takes issue with the majority opinion, that 2 Corinthians is a composite of two or more Pauline epistles. He makes good use of his background in Graeco-Roman epistles, arguing from internal evidence that "the letter as we have it is the letter as written by Paul in the first place." He believes that Paul

unconsciously followed the genre of an "apologetic letter," such as we have from Demosthenes, a form that was in current use in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Thus, the emotional material in 10-13 is not a separate message, but the Peroration, an emotional appeal that drives home the sober arguments of the Exordium.

Paul's opponents were Judaizers from Jerusalem, with a different message of "righteousness" and a boasting of their power and skill. They may have been spun out from the revolutionary foment of Judea and had apocalyptic visions. This resonated with the pneumatic and over-realized theology of some in Corinth. Particularly useful from this standpoint are the "reconciliation" passage in chapter 2, and the social dynamic of "letter-bearing". The eschatological background of the "tabernacle" imagery of chapter 5 is helpful as well.

On the whole better the volume is a reliable update of Hughes. It is readable, accessible, and clear. Nevertheless, apart from the pastoral suggestions, it falls short of the quality of Ralph Martin's Word volume.

Gary S. Shogren

James D. G. Dunn. *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996. \$32. hb. xviii + 388 pages.

The New International Greek Commentary needs no introduction for serious Bible students, and this volume continues to uphold its fine reputation. Dunn mentions in his introduction that it was a natural move to write on Colossians after doing (groundbreaking) work in Romans and Galatians. Since then, Eerdmans has also brought out his *Theology of Paul*.

This contribution, while fresh and very useful, has a more tentative feel than his Word commentary on Romans. His style is occasionally slangy. There are places, particularly in the introductory matters, where one senses that Dunn has nothing new that he wishes to add to the discussion. In other places, he seems unsure of which exegetical option he should choose. Still, his exegesis is sound and readable and does justice both to the Greek text and the historical background. He makes full use of ancient sources, particularly Philo, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the pseudepigrapha.

Dunn's theory of authorship is that Colossians represents the final word of Paul, and serves as the borderline between Paul's authentic letter and the post-Pauline Ephesians and Pastoral Epistles. Colossians was written probably from Rome, the Pauline material being reworked by Timothy just before or after his death. This makes for shifting sands at times, since some of the ideas are attributed to Paul, others to Timothy.

Especially important is Dunn's belief that Paul is having to deal with Jewish, as opposed to pagan or gnostic, ideas. He argues that the archaeology of the Lycus Valley shows that the local Judaism was not syncretistic, thus disallowing the idea of some mix of Jewish and pagan thinking. He argues, along the lines of Fred O. Francis, that the Colossian synagogue contained some members with a mystical bent, similar to practices witnessed at Qumran. Thus, the Colossian Error is not a Christian heresy at all, but the Judaism of the synagogue. While Paul had no evidence of Judaizing aggression, as had taken place in Galatia, he had reason to believe that some elements of Judaism



(mystical participation in angelic worship, a definite list of rules to live by) might prove attractive to the church.

The work on Philemon follows the viewpoint that Onesimus specifically sought out Paul as Philemon's religious leader, in order to have him intercede for slave with master. This is a useful approach, and Dunn pays very close attention to the nature of slavery, manumission, patronage, and friendship in the first century.

Gary S. Shogren

Jerome D. Quinn and William C. Wacker. *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*. Eerdmans Critical Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000. hb, lxxvii + 918 pages. \$65.

For the new millennium both Eerdmans and Baker Books have launched new scholarly exegetical commentaries. The Eerdmans Critical Commentary (ECC) on 1 and 2 Timothy turns out to be a gem, although a surprising choice for the inaugural volume. The late Monsignor Quinn was Catholic and the volume bears the *imprimatur*; he dates the Pastoral Epistles after the death of Paul; finally, the series editor is David Noel Freedman of Anchor Bible renown. This series will obviously be more ecumenical than their New International Commentary.

Readers will be familiar with Quinn's full commentary on Titus in the Anchor Bible. In fact, this companion volume was originally intended for that series. Its format is purely Anchor Bible: after the introduction appears an original translation. For each passage there are lexical and critical Notes and then a longer Commentary. Original languages appear in transliteration. Because the Titus volume was intended to preface this one, the introduction is abbreviated and constant reference is made to the AB volume. There is a very full bibliography. Walker spells out the details of his completion to this posthumous work in a heartwarming preface.

Quinn was a wordsmith, and his writing is a pleasure to read. His overall clarity and the absence of footnotes combine to give the text an attractive appearance, even though the lack of signals in the header or margins makes it difficult to locate comments on specific verses.

In this reading of the PE, the three letters were written as an anthology by an admirer of Paul, some time between 80-85. Historically and theologically they lie midway between Paul's epistles and *1 Clement* and Ignatius. The author incorporated Pauline traditions and fragments, and also Jewish Christian liturgy. In fact, most readers will have reservations about Quinn's level of confidence in reconstructing the supposed underlying traditions. He believed that the PE were written to develop and consolidate the church in the second Christian generation. Titus deals with a more primitive form of Jewish house church, and 1 Timothy the more developed Pauline ecclesiastical structure. 2 Timothy is meant to promote faithfulness to sound doctrine.

What is lacking from Quinn's "mirror-reading" is a rationale for the references to specific apostates and particular heresies in the two books. On the one hand, the names of Hymenaeus, Philetus, Alexander, and others are thought to be taken from genuine Pauline tradition (although the fact that they name names is a sign that the letters could not have been written by Paul). On the other hand, their supposed historical

authenticity is the main reason the author includes them, since their warnings did not have specific relevance for the church in the 80's. The same problem applies to the positive references to Onesiphorus and to Paul's other co-workers.

On specific points, Quinn's lexical notes are very helpful, drawing extensively from the Apostolic Fathers, Qumran, and the classics (but disappointingly little, considering the nature of the vocabulary of the PE, from the papyri). His exegesis of 1 Tim 2:11-12 apparently could not take the recent book by Köstenburger into account, so its lexical base may already be dated. Thus the epistle does not "permit a wife to teach in the public worship and to boss around her husband" through her teaching. The "women" in 1 Tim 3:11 are "women ministers," similar to deaconesses. Particularly pleasing are Quinn's thoughts on the role of prophetic utterance in the "ordination" of Timothy, and on the nature of the hymnic tradition in 1 Tim 3:16-17. His original translation is worth reading, full of lexical insight. For example: "No question of it. Godliness brings gain, great gain." Some "...have strayed off from the faith and skewered themselves with multiple tortures." Paul was "a man who was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and insanely arrogant." Preachers should find the exegesis and pastoral application useful and accessible, more so than in the NIGTC by Knight.

With the ECC offering, and the new ICC volume by I. Howard Marshall, both texts long-awaited, evangelical pastors and teachers will at last be well-served in the Pastoral Epistles.

Gary S. Shogren

Markus Barth and Helmut Blanke. *The Letter to Philemon: A New Translation with Notes and Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2000. Pp. xviii, 561, \$40.00.

An appropriate memorial to the late Markus Barth (d. 1994), this important commentary offers serious readers important insights into not only the letter to Philemon, but the Greco-Roman environment behind Paul's epistle as well. In particular, the extensive introduction (pp. 1-240), and especially the section on "Social Background" (pp. 1-102), provides the reader with invaluable information regarding the nature of the institution of slavery, and the forms of manumission employed in Roman society. Barth and Blanke, thus, provide invaluable information for the interpretation of several NT passages, including some of the parables of Jesus. The introduction alone makes this commentary an important addition to the library of any serious student of the New Testament.

The "Notes and Comments on Philemon" (pp. 241-498) provide detailed linguistic and historical analysis. The text of the letter is divided into five sections: (1) The Address (vv. 1-3), pp. 243-267; (2) A Christian—A Gift of God (vv. 4-7), pp. 267-306; (3) Intervention for a Slave (vv. 8-14), pp. 306-94); (4) The cost of Brotherhood (vv. 15-20), pp. 394-487; (5) Conclusion (vv. 21-25); pp. 487-98. Numerous excursuses are interspersed within the text, providing the reader with additional linguistic, historical and theological insights. Particularly useful are the excursuses on the legal options for Onesimus's future (pp. 367-8) and the discussion on why Paul does not give a plea for manumission (or, freedom) (pp. 368-9).

Barth and Blanke do not shy away from discussing some of the troubling aspects of Philemon, including the lack of any direct plea for freeing the slave Onesimus. The detailed discussion of various views shows that this issue is far from settled. They also point out that Philemon, far from being the innocent victim, may have been the malefactor whose abuse drove Onesimus away (see especially pp. 139-40). The judgment about Onesimus' character is also far from clear from the text (see pp. 141-50), although for some reason he is described as having been previously useless (v. 11).

The bibliography is extensive, and the authors are well acquainted with not only ancient sources, but also the history interpretation from the patristic period (Tertullian, John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsutia), through the Middle Ages (especially citing Thomas Aquinas) and Reformation (citing Calvin and Luther in particular) to the present age (John Knox's and Norman Petersen's work are especially noted). It is, however, surprising that the authors, in spite of their vast reading, have not incorporated more insights from rhetorical criticism. The various sections of the letter are not designated by the appropriate rhetorical terms (exordium, narratio, etc.). Nor is the specific type of rhetoric (judicial, epideictic, deliberative) described. Barth and Blanke may have proceeded in this manner because Philemon is a mixed type of letter, containing elements of an epideictic (or address of praise or blame) address in vv. 1-4 within the framework of a letter of mediation (see S. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* [Library of Early Christianity; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986], 80, 155. On the other hand, they do note Pliny the Younger's (*Epistulae* 9:21) intercession for an escaped freedman as providing parallel examples to Paul's language (p. 166 n. 114-5).

It should be noted that, occasionally, Barth and Blanke's apparent desire to explore every possible detail of particular verses might cause readers to be overwhelmed. The analysis of Phlm 16 alone is the sixty-four pages long (pp. 410-73). Also, as one should expect in a commentary of this detail and depth, the discussion will occasionally be uneven. An example is found on p. 342, when the authors engage in rather crass psychologizing.

Despite these few caveats, however, Barth and Blanke's commentary is an important contribution to our understanding of Paul's letter to Philemon. In addition, the introduction provides one of the finest analyses of the role of slavery in Roman antiquity available in English. In addition, it provides an important resource for the history of interpretation of Philemon. It is a commentary that the reader should consult carefully and often.

Russell Morton

Frederick J. Murphy, *Fallen is Babylon: The Revelation to John*. The New Testament in Context. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998. Pp. xx, 472, \$30.00.

This commentary, while not providing many new insights into the Book of Revelation, gives the reader a lucid, readable account, summarizing some of the best research in the Apocalypse. Murphy attempts to make the text more transparent to readers by situating the Apocalypse in its social, religious, and historical context (p. 1). He is highly dependent upon the work of Adela Yarbro Collins, and adopts her analysis of Revelation as consisting of two cycles of recapitulation and five sets of seven



visions (see pp. 52-53). Murphy also follows Yarbrow Collins's threefold scheme of persecution, judgment, and triumph as key to interpreting the structure of each set of visions.

As a devotee of Yarbrow Collins, Murphy adopts a history of religions methodology, recognizing that John both incorporated and transformed mythological themes current in his culture, particularly the combat myth. Where Murphy is especially helpful is in demonstrating that John's use of mythic themes does not vitiate the truth of his vision. Rather, "[m]yths are narratives about another time and place involving supernatural figures, but those narratives interpret everyday existence, expressing profound convictions and feelings about the world that cannot be expressed as well by any other medium" (pp. 22-23).

Murphy's understanding of the date and circumstances of the writing of the Apocalypse are conventional and well documented. Revelation is dated in the mid-90's, toward the end of Domitian's reign. John has been exiled to Patmos "on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus" (1:9). His exile is understood as resulting from local persecution rather than imperial policy. Support for this hypothesis is found in Younger Pliny's tenth letter to Trajan, asking advice on how to deal with Christians (see pp. 13-14, 17). Murphy sees this letter, as well as the fact that Revelation only mentions one martyr, Antipas in Pergamum (2:13), as evidence that there was no set imperial policy against Christians at end of the First Century.

While evidence does not exist that Revelation was written in the midst of persecution, John clearly expects it. Indeed, he sees the Roman Empire as demonic and inspired by Satan (see comments on chs. 12, 13, 17). Thus, Christians are called upon to resist. John has confidence that Christians will triumph, however, because reality is contrary to appearances. Whereas Rome appears powerful and Christians weak, Rome, in fact, is inspired by the defeated figure of Satan. Christians, on the other hand, have confidence since their God has already triumphed.

This theme of ultimate, although not visible, triumph, is repeated in chapters 17-20. Chapter 17 describes how the ten kings of the earth will turn against the great Harlot (i.e. Rome), and destroy her. Chapter 18 narrates the instantaneous fall of Babylon (a cipher for Rome), and the mourning of the kings of the earth, the merchants and the sailors of the earth. Yet, it is also a cause for rejoicing for the people of God. John reiterates the theme of the destruction of God's enemies in description of the last battle in Rev. 19:11-21. Finally, the description of the millennium and its aftermath demonstrate God's ultimate victory over evil.

Murphy is weakest when attempting to evaluate John's message for Christians today (pp. 442-444). While appreciating the Seer's call for absolute commitment on the part of Christians, he recognizes that other NT writers had different perspectives on how the believer is to live in society. Murphy also recognizes that believers today live in a very different world than John. Perhaps integrating a canonical approach, similar to Wall's (*Revelation*, New International Bible Commentary [Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991]), would be helpful here.

The bibliography is short, but provides a good selection of materials in English. It is weakened by not including some of the important commentaries and studies on Revelation in languages other than English. Nevertheless, for students and

pastors unfamiliar with this method of interpreting the book of Revelation, Murphy provides a cogent, readable commentary, which may be used with profit.

Russell Morton

W.Randolph Tate. *Biblical Interpretation: An Integrated Approach*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997.

The book's jacket is an attractive depiction of a renaissance scholar studying a text. The scholar's cell is within a manorial building suggesting the privileged status of the scholar. It must never be forgotten that the Bible is a gift and that it is an honor to read and study it. The cell is filled with the scholar's "stuff", things which please and inspire? What is your study like? The pose and clothes of the scholar immediately alert the student of this book that hermeneutics is an ancient art. The names come to mind - Paul, Origen, Athanasius, Tertullian, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Schleiermacher, Barth, Brueggeman - all devotees of Scripture, scrupulous, passionate students of the Word. Hermeneutics is a contemplative discipline, practiced alone, prayerfully, but which demands dialogue and discussion with others. Contemporary scholars are connected to a wealth of biblical interpretation and study simply because they are exploring these fabulous texts.

What a wonderful precursor to the exciting world of biblical hermeneutics! *Biblical Interpretation* is a revised and updated introduction to biblical hermeneutics in which the writer has attempted to integrate contemporary approaches to biblical study into an introductory text without discarding past exegetical methods - and that includes the allegorical method. It is a book which doesn't overload the reader with terminology: neither does it treat the reader like a numbskull. It seeks to deepen the individual reader's engagement with the biblical text, to encourage the reader to explore the multifarious aspects of the biblical text, to read for more and more meaning. This is a text for the seeker: and we are all seekers who study the Bible.

In terms of layout, it is superb! Each chapter features a specific area of study - cultural and historical background, language, genre for example. The writer then concludes each chapter with a summary, a list of key concepts and terms, (which have been printed previously in bold), study questions to be used for discussion, and finally a brief bibliography. The study questions are of immense value since they help the student to make sense of the material just read and to apply what has been read in a study of a particular passage. The footnotes direct the student to further reading on particular hermeneutical issues. The writer also gives an exegesis of a specific text in order to show how the various methodologies can be put into practice.

Besides providing basic coverage of historical criticism, Tate explores literary criticism, reader-response criticism, feminist criticism, deconstruction, *ideologiekritik* and intertextuality. This material is sometimes dense and those unfamiliar with literature and literary criticism may struggle to understand the method. However, Tate does make an effort to analyze and synthesize the basic ideas of the proponents of these hermeneutical methods, again offering a comprehensive bibliography for those interested readers who would like to find out more about these postmodern approaches to the biblical text. The key to these methods is that the reader is a partner with the text and the

## Book Reviews

writer in the construction of meaning. The value of this textbook is that Tate has actually made an attempt to incorporate some of these new approaches to biblical interpretation into a book on hermeneutics.

Finally, Tate examines the gospel of Mark as a case study in which he demonstrates the way an integrated approach to hermeneutics allows the reader to assemble meaning to make sense of the narrative. Tate examines Mark in terms of the structures of the plot, the decisions made by the reader and knowledge of the cultural/historical background of the ancient world.

The world of the text in this view is dynamic, a living organism, presenting itself differently on each reading. This also means that as readers we undergo continual change...As the text discloses itself to us in ever-changing ways, perhaps we gain a vision of God who is not the "unmoved mover", the God of dogma, but the God who is dynamic, always relating to the changing world of humanity.

Tate's is a hearty and enthusiastic welcome to the continuum of hermeneutics.

Dorothy Penny-Larter

Michael Frost, *Seeing God in the Ordinary: A Theology of the Everyday*, Peabody: Henderickson Publishers, 1998, pp. 203, \$12.95.

This book is well titled. "Seeing God in the Ordinary" coalesces Frost's purpose and thesis in one phrase. Frost wrote this book to encourage others to be more conscious of the fact that God is in the ordinary aspects of our lives. Using numerous examples that many Christians would consider secular, Frost demonstrates that even the very busy among us, have the time to be deliberate about seeing God--not only in great miraculous acts, but also in the quieter, "ordinary" business of our lives.

Frost begins the first chapter by using Walter Bruggemann's quote about today's "prose-flattened world." Language is so tightly defined that all life has been forced out of words. Christians carry that forcing out of life to the gospel. We are so concerned with wanting to know exactly what the words of the gospel mean that we wind up just going through motions that mean nothing.

Christians also compartmentalize, Frost tells us. Going to church, Bible study, Sunday school are all "good" Christian activities. Yet, watching movies, attending football games, and sunbathing are considered "bad" or even, "profane." This separation, says Frost, is contrary to Jesus' teachings. It reduces the power, "flattens," the truth of the gospel. "Christian" activities may be seen as "better than" others. Why, Frost wonders, do we need to invite God to come to an interview? Why must we invite Him to be a part of the major plans for our lives? Why invite Him as though he were not there with us all along? God's kingdom is already here, Frost reminds us. He then reminds us that Jesus did not teach us to separate--the wheat grew with the weeds.

Having set the basic premise, Frost uses chapters two through six to show us how we too can see God in the ordinary. Being open to awe-inspiring experiences allows us to see Him. These are the times that God compels our attention. Many of Frost's awe-inspiring examples come from nature. Literature and the power of stories provide another avenue Frost strongly recommends we not ignore as a source of God's presence. Not every piece of literature reflects God, but many do. We need to be open



to the possibilities. God is in events; He acts in real time and history. Frost warns us that "chance" encounters may well be God's acting in our lives. Frost also warns us against "objectifying" people. If we only interact with others for their utility in our lives, we may have closed ourselves off from seeing God acting in and through them. Keeping ourselves receptive to the possibility of seeing God anywhere we are, whatever we are doing, re-vitalizes our lives.

Frost does make an effort to refute those that may take his crossing of secular/profane with Christian/sacred boundaries too far. He makes clear distinctions between ordinary life activities that we may typically see as "of the world," such as going to or watching movies, reading novels, or listening to secular music, and those acts that are illegal or immoral. He in no way encourages anyone to look for God in the latter type of activities.

In his epilogue, Frost provides practical suggestions about how to be deliberate in one's daily openness to God. Look for God in everything that you do. Look for him in the damp cold, the smile of a friend, or the grace of a baseball player. See him in the writing of a list for the grocery store, in the drive to work, in putting children to bed.

Although a scholarly work, *Seeing the God in the Ordinary* is written in a manner that invites reading by anyone interested in being receptive to God and His presence in their lives. While Frost does use his Australian culture as a source for some of his examples, he explains their significance, thus neutralizing any cultural distance. Lay persons would find the reading easy; pastors or scholars familiar with Celtic spirituality or Brother Lawrence would hear echoes. We must open our eyes to the grace everywhere we are.

Frost offers three excerpts as a prologue. The third, taken from a novel, truly prepares the reader for Frost's arguments. The scene takes place at the deathbed of a young priest. A friend sitting by his side laments that another priest called to perform the last rites might not arrive in time to perform them. With much effort the dying priest says to his friend, "Does it matter? Grace is everywhere...." Katherine A. Simmons

Stephen F. Noll. *Angels of Light, Powers of Darkness: Thinking Biblically about Angels, Satan and Principalities*. Dourners Grove: InterVarsity, 1998. 255pp.

Stephen Noll, professor of biblical studies and academic dean at Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania, has written what is quite likely the most helpful single volume in English on the topic of angels and demons. The book began with Noll's 1979 doctoral project at the University of Manchester under the late F.F. Bruce and Barnabas Lindars. His dissertation, "Angelology in the Qumran Texts," prompted him to pursue the topic further from the perspective of biblical theology, and over twenty years of careful research and thought have culminated in this outstanding study. The strengths of this work are numerous and the weaknesses few.

The most significant and most evident benefit is that Noll is thoroughly biblical, both in width and depth of coverage. He investigates every relevant text in the Old and New Testaments, and treats the key scriptures in considerable depth. He brings in numerous references from the apocrypha, pseudepigrapha and Dead Sea Scrolls where

these shed light on the canonical texts or the development of angelology. He is able to do this so well in about 250 pages because of the fairly small print type (perhaps a bit too small) and the tightness of his writing. Yet he is not obtuse. While I did wish for greater clarity several times, as with his discussions of the "sons of God" in Genesis 6 (pp. 55-56), "territorial spirits" (p. 149), and Jacob's wrestling with the angel at the Jabbok (pp. 158-159), I was struck with Noll's ability to state his conclusions in a judicious and restrained manner. His restraint is most commendable in view of the sometimes speculative nature of this subject matter and the tendency of popular writers on these themes to fill in and go beyond the canonical materials. While he presents the facts plainly and expresses his conclusions firmly, he refrains from sensationalism. For example, he holds back from proposing a personal guardian angel for each believer (pp. 170-172), yet he believes that "demonization is a possibility for Christians in certain circumstances" (p. 150).

Noll's comprehensiveness makes this the kind of volume that pastors, scholars and other thoughtful Christians will refer to regularly throughout a lifetime of study and service. Every question that arises from the biblical materials, and some from popular speculation, is addressed: Was the Holy Spirit ever an angel? Was Satan ever an angel? Who are the cherubim and seraphim? Why should a woman in Corinth "have authority on her head, because of the angels" (1 Cor. 11:10)? Some readers, eagerly building their collection of popular works on angels and demons, may wish Noll's volume was more "practical," or at least "lighter" reading, with accounts of present day angelic appearances and guidelines for deliverance. It does not seem that Noll would dismiss all such works as foolish or harmful, though some surely are. He would quite likely welcome careful books of this sort. But his task was to produce a more scholarly study, thoroughly grounded in biblical theology, in conversation with the best recent theological minds, for the service of Christ and his church. In this Noll has succeeded admirably.

Robert V. Rakestraw, Bethel Seminary, St. Paul

Luther E. Smith, Jr., *Intimacy and Mission: Intentional Community as Crucible for Radical Discipleship*, Scottdale: Herald Press, 1994, pp. 176, \$12.95.

In Acts, we read that the disciples were together and had *everything* in common. They sold their possessions, and no one claimed that any possessions were his or her own. They shared *everything* they had. This description of community makes most Christians nervous, because it conjures up images of cults or Marxist Communism. Many explain it away by saying that this type of communal arrangement was necessary for the First Church to accomplish its mission, and that the disciples had a special dispensation which made this kind of intimacy possible. Are there communities today that are functioning the way we read in Acts? If so, is this level of intimate togetherness for everyone, or just a special few? What is the role of intentional community in the mission of the Church of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

*Intimacy and Mission* by Luther E. Smith, Jr. provides the reader with an insider's view into Christian communities which are operating and active today. Smith's research is thorough, objective and understandable. Pastors, Bible study groups,

teachers and individuals will find his work accessible and instructive. Smith's primary thesis is that intentional community can be a "laboratory" for radical discipleship. These "experiments" in Christian living explore a fellowship and mission as radical as the Gospel they proclaim. In a time when alienation and general frustration with the Church as an institution is high, Smith has found that,

Religious communities symbolize hope. In them members experiment with methods that enable ideals to become reality . . . the instructive potential of religious communities may finally depend on the larger church's readiness to accept and respect them as legitimate expressions of faith in action. (p. 43).

Dr. Smith is associate professor of Church and Community at The Candler School of Theology of Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. For the purpose of this investigation, Smith chose intentional Christian communities which were committed to the Acts model, including shared property and living space, and a prophetic ministry of social justice. He selected five communities with enough history to discern verifiable patterns of growth and change (a minimum of fifteen years): Church of the Messiah, Koinonia Partners, Patchwork Central, Sojourners and Voice of Calvary. His research was based heavily upon interviews with community members, former members, neighboring residents and civic leaders. He also surveyed their communal documents and covenants. Smith profiles the strengths and weaknesses of each community, their victories and their struggles, as well as the characteristics common to all five. He puts the reader in touch with the pulse of modern communal ministries a single, compact book. *Intimacy and Mission* is an ideal starting place for anyone considering a journey into intentional community, but this is just the tip of its usefulness. The real insight being generated by these communities is not in the answers they yield, but in the questions. Smith challenges the reader with a measuring rod of fundamental discipleship questions, all of which were formed in the crucible of community. This book would open an avenue of significant dialogue for professors and students at theological schools. More importantly, however, it offers a doorway to renewal for the institution of the Church. According to Smith, local congregations would not have to conduct their own communal "experiments in the Gospel," if they will sincerely engage the questions formed there. If the leaders of today's Church are willing to think a bit outside the institutional box, this book will help them "to discern possibilities for radical discipleship in their own lives and churches," (p. 13).

Eric P. Sandberg

Max Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts*. Revised edition. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998. viii + 383 pp., \$19.95.

This is an excellent book, and the US edition is an improvement on its earlier British counterpart. Not only are various printing glitches removed (although the footnote on p. 136 remains incomplete, and typographical errors also remain) but so too a useful extended contents table is added, as is a bibliography. Not least useful here is a convenient listing of some (but not all) of the author's own articles.

Also worthy of note is the addition of three volumes added to the end of the bibliography, all of which might be considered as systematic rather than biblical



theology. This is significant, for Turner's own work is as theologically sophisticated as it is informed by and in dialogue with contemporary New Testament scholarship.

Thus although the book is divided formally into two parts, the first dealing with the development of the doctrine of the Spirit in the New Testament and the second addressing the place of spiritual gifts both then and now, the chapters which form the bridge between the two parts almost warrant a section of their own. Here are introduced lightly and deftly the contributions of figures such as Gabler, Wrede and Schlatter. Having outlined the ongoing implications of their work, Turner, arguing against H Raisanen, seeks to make a case as to why New Testament theology is worthy of study in the secular world of the academy as well as within the confessional world of the seminary.

The case is put briefly, so it is unlikely that Raisanen or his followers would consider Turner's critique to be definitive. Yet what the discussion does succeed in doing is to present sympathetically and cogently (and within the parameters of the historical critical approach to Scripture; Turner, following N T Wright, appeals to critical realism) an argument sometimes assumed rather than articulated by Evangelicals, the most likely readers of this book. The task of New Testament theology thus defended, Turner moves next to demonstrate how he may bring together the voices of the different New Testament witnesses to the Spirit, witnesses whom in part one he dealt with individually.

These witnesses are the usual suspects: Paul, Luke and John. The choice is neither surprising nor unprecedented, but frustrating nevertheless. Certainly these are the three voices that will need to be heard at length in any discussion of a New Testament theology of the Holy Spirit, but surely the relative silence of other contributors will be of as much importance as the contributions of Luke, Paul and John.

What of Matthew, for example with his apparent caution towards charismatics (Mt 7:22) and his Jesus who, unlike the Jesus of Luke and John, appears not to give the Spirit to his disciples precisely because he himself remains with them (Mt 28:19-20, but note Mt 10:20; Cf. Jn 14; Acts 1:8 & 2:33)? Again, there are voices that might be heard from the Apocalypse and from the writer to the Hebrews, just as there appears to be a silence in the letter of James. Or do apparently non-charismatic texts in fact assume the charismatic position of other writers? There would appear to be an imbalance here in Turner's presentation, as in that of other works which have been similarly selective. Perhaps Turner might provide readers of this book with the further benefit of addressing these theological issues in a future work?

Part two of the monograph relates spiritual gifts in the New Testament church to their place in the church of today. Three gifts are focussed on: tongues, healing and prophecy. Turner carefully affirms the contemporary place of all three, and is not afraid graciously but cogently to critique both conservative cessationist and Pentecostal perspectives, as well as some charismatic perspectives, along the way. He is also keen to affirm that the Spirit is at work outside as well as inside the explicitly charismatic and Pentecostal streams of the church. He proposes instead "a *via media* in spirituality between Pentecostalism and more traditional forms of Christianity".

This is a treatment to be commended as much for its irenic tone as for its substance. Those who are in sympathy with Turner's nuanced charismatic perspective

will find here an unparalleled treasure house from which to draw. Those who take other views will find arguments with which they will need to engage.

Readers seeking a detailed and lengthy summary of this book together with a critique from a Pentecostal perspective may be referred to the review article by J C Thomas in *The Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 12 (1998). Turner's response may be found in the same volume.

Andrew Gregory, Oxford

Jon Butler. *Religion in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, 157 pages.

Butler's work is part of the *Religion in American Life* series being published by Oxford University Press. As the title indicates, this book considers religion, in what would become the United States, during the 17th and 18th centuries. Butler focuses not only on the myriad of Protestant groups that would take root in the New World but also on Catholicism and Judaism and on the religious heritage of Native Americans and the African slaves brought to America during this period.

Butler tells a very readable, fascinating story in his six chapters. He begins with an overview of religious thought and practice in Europe, Africa, and North America ("Worlds Old and New"); portrays the initial complexions of religion in the young colonies ("Religion in the First Colonies"); charts the diversity of religious groups in colonial America ("The Flowering of Religious Diversity"); describes "African and American Indian Religion"; relates the story of the Great Awakening ("Reviving Colonial America"); and considers the effects of the American Revolution on the various religious bodies ("Religion and the American Revolution"). The book concludes with several helpful resources: a chronology, glossary, and suggestions for further reading.

Though he is covering much territory, Butler does so with sufficient detail to give the reader a feel for the "lay of the land." Colorful, engaging stories of numerous individuals and events, insets from primary source materials, and abundant sketches and illustrations provide vistas for understanding religion in this time period. He also considers such interesting issues as the role of women in religion during the colonial period, the apocalyptic themes that were frequently woven into the American self-understanding, and the development of freedom of religion in America.

I should note that I did find a few factual difficulties. Butler indicates that Christopher Sauer, who published an edition of the Luther Bible in 1743, was "the best-known Dunker in Pennsylvania" (59). He is referring to Christopher Sauer I who, as one influenced by Radical Pietism, remained a separatist throughout his life. His son, Christopher Sauer II, did join the Brethren congregation at Germantown, Pennsylvania, however. In the same paragraph, Butler states that Sauer's Bible was "the first Bible printed in the American colonies." This is also inaccurate since the Puritan John Eliot published a translation of the New Testament in the Massachusett language in 1663, a point that is correctly noted on page 79. It is appropriate to claim for Sauer's Bible that it was the first European language Bible published in America. Butler also holds that Jonathan Edwards held that Christ would come to "usher in a new millennium," (109) that is, he was premillennial. In point of fact, Edwards was an early proponent of postmillennialism. In spite of these minor points, Butler's work provides a very good

introduction for anyone wishing to gain an overview of religion during this phase of American history.  
Dale Stoffer

John Cassian, *The Conferences*. Ancient Christian Writers 57. Translated and Annotated by Boniface Ramsey, O.P. New York, N.Y: Paulist, 1997.

In the closing years of the fourth century A.D. John Cassian, a young monk originally from the Roman province of Dacia, made two extended visits to Egypt. There, along with his companion Germanus, he made the acquaintance of many of the most prominent desert anchorites. Decades later in Marseilles, he compiled, recorded, and elaborated the wisdom of these holy men in a series of twenty four conferences, or dialogues, which addressed the spectrum of monastic spirituality. The completed work, *The Conferences*, strongly influenced the development of Christian monasticism and spirituality.

A review of the topics addressed by the conferences reveals the reason for the work's enduring influence. Cassian's first conference, with Abba Moses, ostensibly concerns the goal of the monk but offers discussions of matters to which all Christians aspire: inner tranquility, the tension between contemplation and service, the practice of virtues, and the character of love. Subsequent conferences deal with such matters as the cultivation of virtues (e.g. discretion, humility, patience, love, chastity), the practice of disciplines (e.g. prayer, renunciation, fasting), metaphysical speculation (e.g. the nature of the soul, the activities and hierarchies of demonic powers), aspects of Christian living (e.g. the struggle between flesh and spirit, attainment of spiritual knowledge and perfection), and discussions of moral issues (e.g. whether lying or keeping commitments are absolute obligations). The conversational format leads to far-ranging discourses that often have a stream of consciousness flavor, and many times the speakers veer off into topics that may strike the modern reader as obscure and bizarre. Nevertheless, throughout the book the reader encounters profound and practical wisdom on the spiritual life.

The present volume, the first English translation of the entire work, offers a highly readable translation that vividly recreates the conversational ambience of the conferences. Ramsey introduces the text with a succinct overview of Cassian's life and times and then of the *Conferences* themselves. Brief introductions and tables of contents also precede each of the conferences, offering the reader an informed synopsis and reflection of its particular topic and themes. Indexes of scriptural citations and lists of annotations complement these introductions. All are brief and to the point, providing the reader with a thorough understanding of the individual conferences without overshadowing them with commentary. As a result, the reader's focus remains squarely on the words of the abbots, who assume distinct personalities and speak with striking immediacy.

*The Conferences* is unsurpassed as a compendium of desert spirituality and is therefore an excellent point of entry for those interested in exploring a stream of Christian thought and spirituality that is attracting increasing attention. While Cassian writes with monasticism in mind, the wisdom he conveys speaks to the longing of all Christians who seek the purity of heart to which he aspired. Although a substantial



work, it lends itself as well to devotional reading as it does to theological study and will be treasured resource to those who respond to Cassian's invitation to cultivate the inner life.

L. Daniel Hawk

Isaac R. Horst. *A Separate People: An Insider's View of Old Order Mennonite Customs and Traditions*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2001, 262 pages.

I have always found it fascinating that among the various Old Order groups in North America there is usually at least one spokesman within the fellowship who feels the calling and has the ability to portray the life and witness of that group to a modern audience. This is all the more remarkable because in several Old Order groups, including the Old Order Mennonites, it is rare for a person to receive an education beyond the eighth grade. Isaac R. Horst, an octogenarian among the Old Order Mennonites of Ontario, serves in this book as a guide to familiarize readers with the lifestyle and beliefs of his people.

Much of the content of this book originally appeared in monthly columns that Horst wrote for the *Mennonite Reporter*. He has given it new shape by using the literary devices of a tour guide, a lecturer at an Elderhostel, and finally a wise, old grandpa answering the questions of a granddaughter to provide the reader with an overview of Old Order Mennonite life. His style is folksy and informative. He can, however, be very forthright in advocating the Old Order faith, but he does so with a gentle humility that is quite characteristic of Old Order groups.

The Old Order Mennonites trace their roots back to the Anabaptist movement of the 16th century. For the most part, they are descendants of the Swiss Brethren, the Anabaptist group that would dominate Anabaptist immigration to North America in the 18th century. Following the American Revolution, some of these Swiss Mennonites (they began to identify themselves as Mennonites once they came to America) moved from Pennsylvania to Canada, establishing a new settlement in Waterloo County and other areas. The latter 1800s was the formative period for the Old Order Mennonites, as it would be for other Old Order movements. Progressive forces in the Mennonite Church were advocating the adoption of Sunday Schools, prayer meetings, and revivals. Those who felt that such practices "tolerated and encouraged pride and inflated self-esteem" withdrew from the Mennonite Church to form the Old Order Mennonites (p. 29). Horst's book focuses on one of the largest Old Order Mennonite settlements, that in the northern part of Waterloo County, Canada. Today it would claim around 4000 baptized members and adherents (those under age 18).

Horst's book covers the full range of topics that might be asked by an outsider. Some of these topics are worship practices, education policies, view of women, child rearing philosophy, attitudes toward insurance, Sunday Schools, and foreign missions. A brief overview of a few of these topics will give the reader a glimpse of some of the content of the work. One discussion illustrates the community's willingness to accept some modern innovations. Though having a telephone in the home was initially rejected, in time a slight majority of members came to favor allowing phones in homes, if this change did not disturb the peace of the community. Today there are phones in over half the Old Order Mennonite homes, though it was ruled that phone sets had to be

black and that there should be no accessories such as fax, internet, memory, call waiting, etc. Even today, though, some members continue to do without.

The Old Order Mennonites have adopted a view of the Great Commission (Mt. 28:19-20) shared by other Old Order groups: it was fulfilled by the apostles in the first century. This view, used to defend their opposition to foreign missions, is founded on such verses as Colossians 1:23 and Romans 10:18. Horst does note, however, drawing upon an insight by John Howard Yoder in his book *As You Go*, that the Amish and Mennonites have adopted a "migration evangelism" that involves living their faith in the midst of the many cultures throughout the world to which they have migrated.

Horst notes that the influence of the feminist movement in modern culture often leads to questions about their attitude toward women. He is unapologetic about upholding a traditional view of women's roles. He feels that Old Order Mennonite women are generally satisfied with the role of caring for their husband, their children, and their home. He is not bashful in pointing out the problems created by the more "enlightened" concept of women: divorce, wife abuse, neglected children. He is not above admitting that there may be some women in the community "who harbor ill feelings against men in general, and against their husbands in particular," but he feels that the tested and tried counsel of Scripture provides the best counsel for the role of wives and women (p. 115).

Horst has painted a fairly detailed picture of life among the Old Order Mennonites. His book makes an excellent resource for anyone desiring to know more about the Old Order ways. Whatever critique we moderns and postmoderns may have of Old Order life, Horst also provides his own critique of many practices and beliefs that undergird our culture. In answering the most frequently asked questions concerning Old Order life, he raises his own about the culture which we call home. We would do well to learn from both his answers and questions.

Dale Stoffer

Terrence G. Kardong, O. S. B., *Benedict's Rule: A Translation and Commentary*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1996. \$49.95. xviii + 641 pp. Hardcover.

The *Rule of Saint Benedict* stands as a landmark in the history of Christian spirituality, having guided spiritual pilgrims in the monastic Order of Saint Benedict since the early sixth century. In this volume, Father Kardong presents a new translation of the *Rule* (together with the critical edition of the Latin text) and a thoroughgoing verse-by-verse, word-by-word commentary on the Latin text. This detailed commentary lays out the interaction between the *Rule* and the Scriptures that were at the heart of Benedict's monastic vision as well as the church fathers such as Cassian and Pachomius. As Father Kardong's commentary unfolds, the life of the monks living by this *Rule* comes to life. The author's own firsthand experience of Benedictine spirituality comes through in every chapter, as he attends not only to the historical meaning and incarnation of the text, but also to its contribution to the spiritual formation of every Christian.

In short, this commentary stands as a monument to the *Rule's* richness and depth, the product of the author's decades of research, publication, and, perhaps most important of all, living out this *Rule* as a reliable compass for journeying with God.

David A. deSilva

Beverly M. Kienzle and Pamela J. Walker, eds., *Women Preachers and Prophets Through Two Millennia of Christianity*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998, 362 pp., pb, \$17.95.

This volume is a collection of essays on the voices of Christian women, in chronological order, by eighteen contributors including the editors. Kienzle is Professor of the Practice in Latin and Romance Languages at Harvard Divinity School and president of the International Medieval Sermon Studies Society. Walker is Assistant Professor of History at Carleton University.

The contributors are: Nicole Bériou, Anne Brenon, Yvonne Chireau, Jacqueline R. deVries, Edith Wilks Dolnikowski, Katherine Ludwig Jansen, Beverly Mayne Kienzle, Karen L. King, Elaine J. Lawless, Linda Liehr, Phyllis Mack, Carolyn Muessig, Darleen Pryds, Roberto Rusconi, Judylyn S. Ryan, Karen Jo Torjesen, Peter Vogt, and Pamela J. Walker. The material is presented from an academic, feminist viewpoint of church history.

The essays highlight individuals within groups and movements across church history, and are grouped chronologically by periods: Early Christianity, the Middle Ages, 16th-18th Centuries, and 19th-20th Centuries. The preface, by Lawless, and the afterward, by King, inform the reader what he is going to read and what he has read.

The work focuses on lesser-known women, and is clearly written by academicians for academicians. The documentation is heavy; some essays have nearly as much space devoted to endnotes as to essay. Many of the endnotes are in Latin or French, a tribute to the scholarship of the authors, but a drawback to those of us who are more linguistically challenged. Due to the language barrier, this reviewer had no way of judging if sources were primary or secondary.

The quality of the essays is not consistent. Essays on early church figures are very heavy on assumption and light on substance, because they draw rather vast conclusions from little evidence. Some of the essays are wordy and repetitious, others are more readable. The essays on the Waldensian and Cathar women preachers, by Kienzle and Brenon respectively, and the Ursulines, by Liehr, were of overall higher quality. The essay on early Christian *orans* by Torjesen, and that by Rusconi, on women in church art and icons, both feature illustrations.

A recurring theme is the renaming that was necessarily engaged in by many women across the centuries in order that their voices be heard. The inclusion of twentieth century Afro-American syncretic movements does not seem appropriate, given the title of the work.

Academic feminist historians and church historians will want this volume, as would studious pastors with an interest in the topic, and it would be appropriate in university and seminary libraries.

Jean Van Camp

Mary T. Malone, *Women and Christianity; Vol. 1: the First Thousand Years*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001, 376 pp., pb, \$20.

This one-author volume provides a connected chronological account that flows well and is more readable than Kienzle and Walker (reviewed elsewhere in this *Journal*).



## Book Reviews

Malone is retired from St. Jerome's University, and from the University of Waterloo, where she was chair of the Graduate Department of Religious Studies from 1994-1996. As the title indicates, she documents the activities of women in western Christianity over the first 1000 years. Malone writes from a feminist and Roman Catholic perspective of western Christianity. Although concerned to recover women's activities and voices, Malone's is not a radical feminist treatment.

This book emphasizes the fact that institutional reform was usually detrimental to women. Malone highlights the involvement of women in the evangelism of Europe by means of the royal marriages of Christian princesses to pagan kings, and by egalitarian male-female cooperation in the monastic enterprise.

This volume will be useful to anyone interested in the participation of women in church history, pastors, church libraries, university and seminary classes in church history, or feminist history. Unfortunately, at present Orbis has no information about a forthcoming second volume.

Jean Van Camp

Mark A. Noll, *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000, pp. 352, \$18.99.

In recent years students of church history have been served by several books which have made the subject easier by reducing the volume of facts to be grasped. Three different illustrations of this trend are A. Kenneth Curtis, et al, *Dates with Destiny: The 100 Most Important Dates in Church History* (1991), Justo L. González's *Church History: An Essential Guide* (1996), and Mark Shaw's *10 Great Ideas from Church History* (1997). Noll's book continues this trend with its own unique contribution.

The good sales of the original edition (1997) of *Turning Points* justify the excellent reviews the book received from scholars. That a second edition is needed so soon, with the featured change being study questions for each chapter, demonstrates the usefulness of the book for students. My own use of the book as a supplemental text in a church history survey class verifies its appeal to students.

After a stimulating introduction on the usefulness of studying the history of Christianity, Noll devotes twelve chapters to "hinge-points" in the story, where changes in thought or action dramatically affected the direction of the church. His list includes the fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), the Council of Nicea (325), the Council of Chalcedon (451), St. Benedict's Monastic Rule (530), the coronation of Charlemagne (800), the schism of the Eastern and Western Churches (1054), the Diet of Worms (1521), the English Act of Supremacy (1534), the founding of the Jesuits (1540), the conversion of the Wesleys (1738), the French Revolution (1789), and the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910. His final chapter sketches out significant twentieth century movements like Pentecostalism, Vatican II, new roles for women, Bible translation, and the survival of the Church under Communism. One could juggle Noll's catalog with selections that reflect a different historical bias, but few can quibble over the significance of the events he emphasized.

The pattern of *Turning Points* has several advantages. First, it helps students and non-specialists to grasp the "big picture" of Christian history. Scholarly texts on

church history, especially if they follow a chronological scheme, often overwhelm readers with accounts that are too detailed, and sometimes are overly complex as well.

Secondly, its economy of subjects enables a luxury of understanding. Like a curator of a museum showcases only the most significant artifacts, so Noll's selections assist students to a deeper understanding of representative events. One can absorb the moment and recall its impact. If one gives twelve subjects the attention usually given to fifty (to use a convenient number), it stands to reason that she will have a clearer understanding of those twelve events.

And, finally, *Turning Points* probes connections between decisive events and persons and their contribution to all subsequent church history. Noll is convinced that history matters. "Turning points" cast long shadows. For good or ill, the church today carries the fingerprints of its past, but not in a fatalistic sense. The author believes that the study of the history of Christianity can help shape proper attitudes in contemporary Christians. The historical perspective of the church's mission can clarify purpose in the present moments of decisions (pp. 18-19). Readers of church history are not just custodians of a tradition, they are also change agents in the present and creators of the future. If they have the humility to recognize their fallible humanity in the record of the church's sins, they may also grasp the fact that Christ the Lord is building His church: the real cause that illuminates the church's successes.

The first edition already included many attractive features in each chapter: suggestions for further reading, timely visuals, focused sidebars, and selected prayers and hymns of the period. The second edition includes study questions for each part of the book (pp. 320-336), thanks to the work of Robert H. Lackie. The questions help students and adult study groups to process the ideas that the book raises. They aim both at clearer understandings and more relevant applications of the insights gleaned from the history of christianity.

Noll's intent was to write a book for students and lay persons in the church. He has clearly succeeded, and these readers are grateful.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Eileen Power, *Medieval Women*, edited by M. M. Postan. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. 104 pp. \$9.95.

Gilbert Dahan, *The Christian Polemic Against the Jews in the Middle Ages*, translated by Jody Gladding. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998. 130 pp. \$10.00.

Somewhere between "Camelot" and the "Dark Ages" lies the true Medieval Period. Scholarship is slowly reclaiming this neglected space. Still, outside of Catholic scholars and history specialists, this age is not well-known by Western readers. These two, slender books are accessible routes into this period of European life.

Brief and introductory books in their approach, they do not overwhelm the reader who is making tentative forays into this subject. Yet the authors probe two vital aspects of the time: the place of women and the church's approach to Jewish people. Plentiful evidence is provided to alleviate ignorance of the period, and interpretations are offered to counter erroneous preconceptions about the culture of the time.

One might wonder why the five popular essays of Power's *Medieval Women* should be republished nearly sixty years after her death, especially when women historians have provided so many works that are more contemporary. There are at least two good responses to that question. First, she was one of the pioneer leaders of social and economic history, with a recognized speciality in women of the medieval period. She earned her academic credentials at Cambridge University and the London School of Economics and subsequently taught at both schools, succeeding academically in a context that was dominatedly male (especially at Cambridge). The outline of her life is nicely sketched by Maxine Berg in the forward. Her life illumines her academic work and would be of interest to anyone interested in feminist studies.

Her scholarly writings accord her a place of prominence in medieval social and economic history. Her research is still basic to those who would work in the period. This collection of essays was published by her husband, M. M. Postan, long after her death, and is primarily directed to a popular audience (pp. xxvii-xxviii). It contains the fruit of her extensive research but with a simplicity of style and a vigor of presentation that captures a common readership. One suspects this is the reason Cambridge University decided to issue it in a Canto edition.

These essays, in the second place, destroy various stereotypes of medieval women. Their real status in the home, workplace, school, and church (especially the nunneries) is contrasted to the inferior place assigned them by the clergy and aristocracy in the early medieval period. Powers notes that the creators of this inferior view of women were the very men who least knew the lot of "the great mass of womenkind" (p. 1). On the other hand, medieval women never occupied the rosy pedestal portrayed by the romantic writers in the "courtly love tradition." It was the real life of medieval women that she wanted to uncover, and that story alone is delightfully informative.

Gilbert Dahan takes a parallel track to Christian relations with Jews in the medieval period to what Powers did with women. He chooses this period because he believes it has much to teach us today about how to dialogue with those who hold to alternate religious views. His introduction addresses head-on the perception of the average reader that the medieval period was among the worst of times in Christian-Jewish relations. He contends that medieval Europe was anything but uniform. Conditions varied widely both in regard to time and place.

Dahan divides these centuries into three periods: the early middle ages when Christianity and Judaism were missionary competitors; the twelfth to the early fourteenth centuries when they had developed solid religious identities; and the end of the age when various crises caused relations between the groups to deteriorate markedly. The author isolates the second period as the setting for his study, because he believes it was best suited to honest dialogue. Both sides were confident of their respective positions but still listening to the other with some admiration short of belief.

Among the diverse literary sources which reflect the Jewish-Christian conflict, the author chooses the dialogue as best suited for his research on the Christian polemic against the Jews. The records reflect various kinds of dialogues, ranging from informal discussions between Jews and Christians in their normal social encounters to staged debates and state-ordered defenses.

There is little surprise that the primary topics became the question of the "true" Israel, the difference in biblical interpretation, and the coming of the messiah. What is



of interest, however, are the shifting grounds of the debate and the responses of the Christian world to the Jewish contentions. Dahan illustrates how Christians became aware of the Talmud during the middle period and began to engage it in their polemic. He points to the fact that both church and state issued warnings and prohibitions against ordinary Christians engaging Jews in religious argument as evidence of the strength of the Jewish position. Jews were seen as both better informed and more skillful debaters than their ordinary counterparts. Christian apologists, especially the Dominicans and the Franciscans, were forced to study Hebrew and Arabic in an effort to confront Jews on more even terms.

The book is rich in historical backgrounds and literary sources that bear on the topic. The reader is introduced to many of the key Christian theologians of this period. The only serious question is whether these disputes are as serviceable to contemporary Jewish-Christian dialogue as the author thinks they are. Congeniality depends more upon political and social circumstances than it does formal religious argument. The very best polemic of the medieval period still serves us best today as a negative illustration, rather than a positive model, of how inter-religious dialogue ought to proceed.

Gilbert Dahan really is concerned that Christians and Jews can move toward healing of their troubled relationships over the centuries. The book is very helpful in illustrating one phase of the past. The question is whether his study provides medicine for the healing or merely another diagnosis of the disease. Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Paul R. Spickard and Kevin M. Cragg, et al, *A Global History of Christians: How Everyday Believers Experienced Their World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic (A division of Baker Book House Co.), 2001, 486 pp., 26.99.

First published in 1994 in the hardback copy which is now out of print, it is available now in paperback. Under the former title, *God's Peoples: A Social History of Christians*, the book was reviewed in the 1996 *Ashland Theological Journal* (pp. 198-199).

The content is the same in both editions. Only the title and form of the book have changed. There is one feature that stands out in the current edition: the cover is vastly improved. The picture of an African American baptismal service is clearly portrayed. The dark cover of the original book all but made the photo indiscernible.

This cover photo underscores the book's purpose to set forth a social history of Christianity, where the focus is upon Christians in their context - their world of culture and experience. As a one volume treatment of the subject, it is an admirable achievement. Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Laura Wilson, *Hutterites of Montana*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000, 150 pages.

This book deserves to be called unique. Laura Wilson, a professional photographer, has created a stunning portrayal of Hutterite life through the medium of black and white photographs. She weaves into these images a very informative

narrative concerning Hutterite history, beliefs, and life. The result is a rich tapestry that brings to life one of the most unusual subcultures in North America.

The Hutterites trace their roots back to 1528 when a small group of Anabaptist refugees, seeking sanctuary in Moravia in the present day Czech Republic, pooled all their worldly goods and began what has become a nearly 475 year experience of communalism. The Hutterites flourished during the 1500s, reaching nearly 20,000 under the tolerant protection of the Moravian nobles. During the 1600s and 1700s, however, the ravages of the Turkish invasions and the Catholic Counter-Reformation decimated the Hutterite colonies until only nineteen Hutterites remained in the 1750s. They experienced a renewal when fifty Lutherans joined the movement and when they were invited by Catherine the Great to settle on her vast holdings in the Ukraine in 1770.

Again the Hutterites flourished, only to experience a renewed challenge to their nonresistant, separate way of life in the 1870s when Russia sought to assimilate them and other Germanic settlers into Russian culture. Between 1874 and 1877 the entire Hutterite population came to the United States; four hundred of the approximate one thousand immigrants decided to reestablish their communal life in three colonies in the Dakota Territory. In the United States, the same experience of initial prosperity was followed by the hardship of anti-German sentiment during World War I. Harassed because of their retention of the German language and their nonresistant convictions, many Hutterites moved into southern Canada. Even here the need for large tracts of land for their communes resulted in Canadian laws being passed which severely restricted Hutterite expansion. Since World War II the primary focus of Hutterite growth has again been the United States; they have established many new colonies in Montana, the Dakotas, Minnesota, and Washington.

Today the Hutterites number over 40,000, living in hundreds of colonies on the prairies of North America. Wilson focuses her work on the more conservative Hutterites living in Montana. Over a fourteen year period she was able to win their trust as she respectfully entered into their life for two or three week stays. Hutterites shun many American "necessities": radios, televisions, cars, even photographs. Due to the trust she had gained and her persistence, she was able to obtain permission from the leaders of Hutterite colonies to take black and white photographs of those people who agreed to be her subjects. She says of her photographic documentary, "I tried to take the photographs I needed to tell the story I wanted to tell. I photographed the faces that moved me, not just any faces, but the faces that revealed a story within, including the contradictions" (p. 10). Her work truly succeeds in telling a story that is both hers and that accurately portrays Hutterite life.

I was intrigued by the effect of the exclusive use of black and white photographs of the day to day life of the Hutterites. In contrast to our American culture, which must express itself in as varied and plural "colors" as possible, the Hutterites appear almost monochromatic, stressing the yielding of individualism to the greater good of the community. Indeed, Hutterite society may seem at almost polar opposites to the values of American culture. Yet Wilson's photographs portray people who have personalities revealing strength, variety, and calm assurance of their value and significance. There is enough subtle humor in both image and text to remind the viewer/reader that these people are not somber automatons but find joy and pleasure in their simple, separate ways. Another interesting feature of the work is that none of the

photographs has an accompanying caption on the same page as the photograph; all explanations are found on three pages at the end of the book. The effect is to draw the viewer into the story of the image, to force us to engage our right brain, not our left brain.

Wilson's narration of Hutterite life and faith, though brief, gives sufficient detail to answer most questions the reader would have. It likewise provides a textual foundation for being able to understand more thoroughly the life visualized in her photographs. Besides reviewing the history of the Hutterites, Wilson also describes their leadership structure, their religious beliefs, the place of women in their culture, the education of the young, and the strength of their communal tradition.

Though the viewer/reader would want to supplement this work with one of the books in the well chosen list of resources on the Hutterites in the "Suggested Reading" at the end of the book, it certainly deserves a place on the bookshelf or, even better, the coffee table. Wilson's artistic gift makes this pictorial essay a wonderful addition to the slowly increasing literature on the Hutterites.

Dale Stoffer

Avery Brooke, *Healing in the Landscape of Prayer*. Boston: Cowley Publications, 1996.

Avery Brooke is an Episcopal laywoman, a spiritual director, a seminary instructor, and an author. Reading this 115 pages of text feels like one is enjoying a personal conversation with the writer. She wears her learning lightly and shows a remarkable combination of "holy common sense" and spiritual humility. In introducing the book she says, "I am a middle-of-the-road Christian who does a lot of praying and who believes that healing should be seen as a part of the everyday fabric of Christian life—I have written *Healing in the Landscape of Prayer* because I believe healing should be reclaimed to take the central place in the Christian way that it held in the ministry of Jesus and of the early church" (p. xi).

In concluding the book she says,

"While writing this book I found myself almost driven to pray for the church. In learning about healing I have gained a great deal from evangelicals, but they are all too often scorned or ignored by liberals and academicians. On the other hand, many charismatic evangelicals choose to scorn or ignore liberals and academicians. Somewhere in the middle I pray for all sides, not so much that they will change their minds but that they may find in the other what they can admire and thank God for (p. 113).

The book's central, longest chapter contains wise counsel for any who would develop a healing ministry within a congregation. Brooke offers this after chapters which describe her own experience, the history of healing in the church universal, and healing as one element in prayer's larger "landscape." The second half of the book considers inner healing of spirit and psyche (as distinct from what the New Age offers) and the reality of exorcism and deliverance. The work concludes with an excellent annotated bibliography and printed resources for healing services.



This is an ideal place from which to begin exploring Christian healing and how the church can go about it. The book is wisely informed, simply written, devoutly grounded, and delightfully balanced. It can be perused in an evening, but it deserves prayerful pondering. Jerry Flora

Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God*. San Francisco: Harper, 1998. 428 pp.

Dallas Willard is both a graduate school professor and an ordained Southern Baptist minister. From his position at the University of Southern California he has published widely in philosophy, his teaching field. He is known in Christian circles for two books, *Hearing God* (1999) [originally *In Search of Guidance* 1984] and *The Spirit of the Disciplines* (1998). If the latter was a blockbuster, then his newest work, *The Divine Conspiracy* (1998), is a nuclear explosion on the playground of the churches. Here we have a wide-sweeping, yet penetrating treatment of the Kingdom of God as Jesus conceived it and offered it. For practical purposes, this may be the finest exposition of that topic since the work of George E. Ladd a generation ago (especially *Jesus in the Kingdom*, later retitled *The Presence of the Future*). What Ladd did for evangelical exegesis is now offered more widely in the treatment by Willard.

*The Divine Conspiracy* is basically an exposition of the Sermon on the Mount. Subtitled *Rediscovering our Hidden Life in God*, the book begins with chapters on "Entering the Eternal Kind of Life Now," "Gospels of Sin Management," and "What Jesus Knew: Our God-Bathed World." Willard's working - even in these titles - suggests that he has tried to think through issues for himself and formulate his conclusions in attractive, relevant phraseology. Aside from Scripture, his chief dialogue partners according to the index are C.S. Lewis and Dietrich Bonhoeffer (with whom he agrees) and Charles Ryrie (with whom he doesn't). The book almost has a feel of a magnum opus, as though all Willard has done in philosophy and religion throughout his career now comes to fruition in this meaty, muscular volume.

This is not the pabulum of so much that passes for inspirational Christian writing. This is a training table for followers of Jesus, and - for Willard - that means all believers, period. He will not settle for discipleship as one option for some Christians. It is an all-or-nothing proposition toward which he exegetes, expounds, illustrates, refutes, persuades, and preaches for all he's worth. He finds ammunition in pop songs, philosophers, scientists, poets, devotional writers, news stories, cultural historians, theologians, and hundreds of Scripture texts. The net result is so rich, so concentrated that one cannot digest it in a single reading. Sometimes a chapter can be finished. At other times only a section or just a page. Then one must close the book in order to rest, ponder, and pray. As I read, I often found myself musing, "This is so right! This is so true! This is so wise!"

Richard J. Foster (who terms Willard his mentor) has identified four leading features of *The Divine Conspiracy*: its comprehensive nature, setting out "a Weltanschauung, a worldview"; its accessibility ("so understandable, so readable, so applicable"); its depth ("simply stunning"); and its warmth ("so penetrating an intellect combined with so generous a spirit"). I can easily endorse all of those. On review,

shortly after its publication, concluded by saying, "If you read only one book [this year], make it this one." But be warned: Put on your thinking cap. Fasten your seatbelt. Open your heart. And hang on for the ride of your life!

Jerry Flora

Ahmed Ali (translator), *Al-Qur'an: A Contemporary Translation*. 9<sup>th</sup> edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001. 572 pages. \$19.95 (paper).

This is an attractive, bi-lingual edition of the Qur'an, the sacred scriptures of Islam. The English version is printed in a bold type that makes it very readable. The Arabic text in parallel columns is painfully small, however, and the bi-lingual Penguin edition is a far better resource for the text in its original language. The translator, a late celebrated Pakistani poet, has produced a fluid and fine translation several levels in literary quality above his competitors. He has, however, striven to take as little poetic license with the text as possible (and pious): that which was obscure in Arabic remains obscure in English (contrast the more periphrastic rendition by Marmaduke Pickthall in *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran: An explanatory translation* [New York: New American Library]). I would have valued more in the way of introduction and explanatory notes.

In our increasingly global culture, an acquaintance with the sacred traditions of Islam — especially the ways in which those traditions reconfigure the sacred traditions of Jews and Christians — would seem a necessity for Christians entrusted with the Great Commission. This translation, in tandem with a more critical introduction to the Islamic faith, would serve that end admirably.

David A. deSilva

Stephen J. Stein. *Alternative American Religions*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, 156 pages.

This work is part of the Oxford University Press series entitled *Religion in American Life*. It focuses on those movements in American religious history that have at times been labeled as sects or cults. Stein prefers not to use these more negative terms, however, in favor of terms that highlight the fact that these groups are outside the mainstream of religious life: alternative religions, outsider religious groups, or marginal communities. He will also at times refer to these groups with a term developed recently by sociologists: new religious movements (NRMs).

Stein approaches his material historically, considering NRMs in three American historical periods: the colonial period, the 19th century, and the 20th century. In the introductory chapter, he presents definitions of terms relating to these movements and discusses characteristics that are common to them. His seven chapter headings reveal some of the fascinating and colorful variety found in these alternative religions: Early Dissenters and Popular Religion; Peace Movements in Colonial America; Communitarian Living on the Margins; Apocalyptic Traditions: Watching and Waiting for the End; Healers and Occultists: Women of Spiritual Means; Sectarians in the City; and 20th-Century Sects and Cults. He makes no attempt to be comprehensive in his treatment, but his selection of representative groups does acquaint the reader with the many forms that these groups have taken.

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Stein's work is an accurate and fair appraisal of these alternative religions. It is very readable, giving enough detail to acquaint the reader with the main features of each group but not so much as to become laborious. Numerous pictures and illustrations provide visual reinforcement to the text. He also incorporates well chosen first hand accounts to provide "local color" for a number of the groups.

One interesting question that Stein alludes to several times in the book is why America has been the birthplace to so many NRMs. He indicates that several characteristics of American culture have been especially important: an increasingly diverse population, the interaction of countless traditions, individualism, the pioneering spirit, the principle of religious freedom.

This book provides a good, basic introduction to alternative religions in America. It is a good starting place for the reader desiring an overview of these groups. Its bibliography also directs the reader who is looking for a more detailed discussion to excellent resources in the field.

Dale Stoffer

L. de Bois and R. J. van der Spek, *An Introduction to the Ancient World*. New York and London: Routledge, 1997. xx + 321 pp., \$70.00 (hardcover)/ \$22.99 (paperback).

Karen Rhea Nemet-Nejat, *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*. London and Westport, CN: Greenwood, 1998. xxii + 346 pp, \$49.95.

Daniel C. Snell, *Life in the Ancient Near East, 3100-332 B.C.E.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997. xvii + 270 pp., hardcover, \$30.00.

Piotr Bienkowski and Alan Millard, ed., *Dictionary of the Ancient Near East*. London: British Museum/ Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000. x + 342 pp., hardcover, \$49.95.

The rise in programs on television concerning peoples and locales distant in time and place indicates a welcome realization that the world has a history which might not only be useful to know something about, but might also prove interesting. These volumes indicate a parallel interest in print studies, which are able to provide a more detailed, academic probe into the life and times of ancient peoples than is possible within the scope of a filmed documentary.

The volume by de Bois and van der Spek is the broadest in scope. It is translated from the Dutch original. The classical bent of the two authors is illustrated by the book's content, which covers the ancient Near East in 65 pages, while devoting 81 to Greece and 146 to Rome. The volume begins with a very brief (3.5 pages) introduction which includes a 'diagram' of language families, namely the Semitic and Indo-European. Here a good opportunity for indicating historical development and linguistic interrelationship is lost, since the families are simply listed, with no explicit rationale for their ordering. Egyptian is erroneously included within the Semitic family.

The history of the Near East is given a very cursory glance at a level which might serve for a school textbook. Maps, line drawings, and photographs supplement the



text and often provide much more detailed information in their explanatory notes than does the text itself.

Chapters on religion (polytheism, henotheism, monotheism), economy and society (with helpful diagrams illustrating income and expenses of a palace economy and the labor force), and government conclude this section. Even within this brief span one must be wary of infelicities, such as an indication that the laws of Hammurabi were inscribed for public consultation when in fact the populace, as well as the court itself, would have been illiterate. Also problematic is the statement that the prostrate Jehu on the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser (who could be a royal emissary rather than the king himself) is shown as inferior to the Assyrian overlord because he is smaller. In fact, it is his prostration before the sovereign which indicates his relative status, since both figures are of the same size.

Based on these few observations, I would imagine that the sections discussing Greece and Rome might also need careful evaluating, though the expertise of the authors is noted to be greater in these areas. Not being conversant with these periods, I can only make comment on the section with which I am more familiar. In light of this, the volume will prove interesting to the lay reader, but the need to use a very critical reading which would probably be beyond their expertise suggests that this is not the volume of first choice.

The volume by Nemet-Nejat is a different story. She keeps her attention focused on a smaller geographical area, Mesopotamia, with which she has great familiarity. Her familiarity with the history and sociology of the area is greatly aided by her ability to read and interact with the original texts, so she can check and supplement secondary sources.

The book opens with a 4-page time line running from 12000 to 500 BC giving the archaeological period names with approximate dates, societies and rulers in both northern and southern Mesopotamia, and innovations in culture and technology. This provides a useful overview of history and cultural development. The first three chapters set the stage, discussing the rediscovery of the lost Mesopotamian society and the decipherment of its writing, archaeology and chronology; a very brief general overview of geography and the inhabitants of the area and their languages; and a historical overview. There then follow chapters on: writing, education, and literature; sciences; public and private life; recreation; religion; government; economy. There is a concluding, summary chapter, a helpful 12 page glossary and 3 page bibliography.

The book is well illustrated by black-and-white photographs and drawings. It is written at a level that an educated layperson will find it accessible and fascinating, and scholars will find it a good textbook for classes in ancient Near Eastern civilization. Church, public, college and seminary libraries should have the volume on their shelves.

Snell's volume falls between the two mentioned previously as regards geographical area covered and usefulness. He covers the Near East (Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Iraq and Iran) from the fourth millennium to the conquest of the area by Alexander in 333 BC. He chooses to arrange his volume chronologically in six chapters ranging from the origin of cities through the Babylonian and Persian periods. In each period he covers aspects of demography, society including its constituent groups, family life, women, work, land and agriculture, animal husbandry, crafts, trade, money, and government and the economy. He has special discussions of Egypt, since much of

the relevant information is unavailable since ancient sites are currently occupied, and Israel, which has less available information apart from the Bible, than other areas. Snell also looks a little at the contemporary situations outside the ancient Near East, where there is information. Each chapter starts with a little fictional vignette illustrating and making alive some point of the culture to be discussed in the chapter.

Less depth is provided than in the Nemet-Nejat volume, as is evident from the 132 pages in these chapters compared to double that in hers, though he does have almost 70 pages of notes and 40 pages of bibliography. Illustrations are more limited as well. The two volumes look like they would be a good pair to use together. One could get a more panoramic view of the area through Snell, and then zoom in for a closer and more detailed look through Nemet-Nejat.

As evident from the title, the Bienkowski-Millard volume is a different genre than the previous three, being a reference work. The editors are on the faculty of University of Liverpool, and they are assisted by 11 other contributors from Britain, Germany, Turkey and the US. The geographical area covered includes Mesopotamia, Iran, Anatolia, the Caucasus, the Fertile Crescent, and Arabia, so Egypt is only briefly mentioned. The period covered is from the Lower Paleolithic Period to the fall of Babylon in 539 BC. Articles cover elements of history, religion, society and culture, geography, and language and literature, as well as archaeologists who have excavated and published the various important sites. The volume includes a simple map, a one page chronological chart, a 4 page synoptic king list for Babylonia, Assyria, Elam, Mitanni, Ugarit, and the Hittites, and a subject index. The volume is an excellent one-volume reference work, useful in libraries at all levels, though needing supplementation by such tools as *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und vorderasiatischen Archäologie* in more serious academic settings.

David W. Baker

William W. Hallo, general editor, and J. Lawson Younger, associate editor. *The Context of Scripture*, Volume 2: *Monumental Inscriptions from the Biblical World*. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2000. Xxvi + 438 pp., hardback, \$131.00.

This is the second of three projected volumes which seek to update and replace J.B. Pritchard's *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, which has been the standard reference work for the past half-century. The first volume of the series was reviewed in this *Journal* XXX (1998) 105–106. This volume provides an impressive array of texts, (usually) newly translated from Egyptian, Hittite, West Semitic (Moabite, Ammonite, Hebrew, Phoenician, Old and Imperial Aramaic, Philistine, and Nabataean, as well as the dialect of Deir 'Alla), Akkadian, and Sumerian by some 33 scholars from 6 different countries.

The volume commences with an introductory essay on "The Bible and the Monuments" by the general editor. Here he discusses text taxonomy, how texts are categorized in the series. 'Canonical' texts, the title of volume 1, are those which serve as part of the educational curriculum and thus are intended for more than just a single use. Monumental inscriptions, the subject of the present volume, are those intended to 'last for all time as memorials to those kings and other mortals who built or dedicated them, or to the deities to whom they were dedicated' (xxi-xxii). Archival material,

presumably the subject of the next volume, is that which is intended for preservation for a shorter time period, being thus more ad hoc and time-oriented.

Egyptian texts include royal inscriptions from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> dynasty and mortuary inscriptions including pyramid and coffin texts, excerpts from the Book of the Dead, some harper songs and grave inscriptions. A bibliography of 5 pages follows the inscriptions. Hittite texts include edicts, annals, treaties and several hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions, followed by a 4 page bibliography. West Semitic is represented by building and memorial inscriptions in Moabite (Mesha), Ammonite, the dialect of Deir 'Alla, Hebrew (Siloam Tunnel), Old Aramaic (including the Tell Dan inscription in which 'the house of David' is mentioned), Aramaic, Philistine, and Nabataean; votive/dedicatory inscriptions in Hebrew and Aramaic, mortuary inscriptions, seal and stamp impressions, weights, treaties, and various miscellaneous texts like the Gezer calendar. There follows a 14 page bibliography (though the *Encyclopedia of Islam* should probably be listed by the editor H.A.R. Gibb, not W.J. Dumbrell). Akkadian building inscriptions cover the range from the Old Akkadian to the Achaemenid periods. There are also seals, weights, treaties, laws, edicts, boundary stones, royal grants, and an 11 page bibliography. Finally, Sumerian is represented by building, votive, seal and weight inscriptions, laws, and Gudean temple hymns, followed by a 4 page bibliography.

Texts are provided with a brief introduction, bringing out any biblical relevance, and include a bibliography for the text. Footnotes provide help on the translation and other sources which might be of use. The translations are well done, and the editors have done an excellent job. They and the publisher are to be thanked. There are a few slips (e.g. 198, n.\* uses a reference system not employed in the volume itself), as might be expected in such a vast enterprise, and a more thorough discussion of the criteria for selection of texts and excerpts would have been useful. Students and teachers will find the work invaluable, and it should be found in any serious academic library.

David W. Baker

C. Marvin Pate, *Communities of the Last Days: The Dead Sea Scrolls, the New Testament and the Story of Israel*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 2000. Pp. 303. \$29.99

In *Communities of the Last Days*, C. M. Pate takes on the dauntingly immense task of comparison of two large bodies of literature, namely, the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) and the New Testament (NT). Pate allows the reader to witness the engagement of two communities of the Second Temple period as each attempts to situate itself within the "story of Israel" through its respective claim to be the eschatologically restored/restoring people of Israel (19-20). In Pate's opinion, *Communities of the Last Days* avoids the methodological pitfalls of literary dependence of the NT writings on the DSS (or vice versa) by asserting that the point of comparison is not literary sharing but a reworked, common tradition. According to Pate, "the story of Israel is the metanarrative adapted by the DSS and the NT" (18). This metanarrative is the story of Israel (sin-exile-restoration) retold by each community to redefine the practices, symbols, and beliefs of that story.



Pate attempts to trace this metanarrative in a compare/contrast format, thematically progressing through large portions of the DSS and NT. Throughout, Pate relies heavily on the interpretive perspective of N. T. Wright, especially in Wright's *Jesus and the Victory of God* and *The New Testament and the People of God*. In so doing, Pate not only aligns himself with a gifted scholar/theologian but also inherits the interpretive dangers of an all-encompassing perspective on Second Temple Judaism.

Pate aids the reader in ease of format and thematic progression. Beginning with an analogy of the discovery of the DSS and the sin-exile-restoration motif, Pate introduces the reader to the Deuteronomistic tradition as the dominant Old Testament (OT) perspective on Israel's story within Second Temple Judaism. A concise, although informative, catalog of the various types of literature among the DSS follows, highlighting their common thematic ties of exile-restoration as found in the Deuteronomistic tradition. Pate then continues, in chapter 2, to draw the reader into a discussion of the major arguments for and against the Essene hypothesis, among others, as well as the arguments (dis)associating the DSS from/to the NT corpus. Pate concludes that the best evidence suggests the primacy of the Essene hypothesis as well as an indirect literary linkage, at best, between the DSS and the NT.

Examining the use of peshar in Matthew and the DSS, Pate focuses in chapter 3 on what he considers the central question the literature addresses: Who is the true Israel? The interpretive schema of peshar hermeneutics is applied to that literature which exhibits, according to Pate, the three styles of pesharim (singular, continuous, and thematic) as well as their usage of the four tenets of the Deuteronomistic tradition (disobedience, messenger(s) sent, messenger(s) rejected, and judgment). Peshar, relying on the Deuteronomistic tradition, is, in Pate's view, the "hermeneutic of legitimation" (106) not only for Matthew but also Paul's writings and Hebrews. This is further evidence for each community's concern to redefine the true Israel, in Pate's view.

Continuing the perspective of legitimation expressed by each community represented by the DSS and the NT, Pate addresses the theme of Messianism as is contrasted with the "common interpretation" (112) of Second Temple Judaism. The DSS and NT perspectives on Messianism, in Pate's view, "argue that ethnic Israel is ironically aligned with the enemies of God" in an effort to legitimate themselves as "the genuine people of God," with the understanding that Messianism is nonetheless divergently interpreted within each community (132).

The retelling of Israel's story is no less important in chapter 5; however, Pate here begins to consider those symbols and practices through which the DSS and NT express their legitimating redefinition. Considering the DSS and Luke-Acts in particular, Pate contrasts the DSS and NT with Second Temple Judaism and shows the progressively divergent perspectives between the DSS and NT themselves. Subversion of Israel's story is the *modus operandi*.

Subversion of Israel's story also, perhaps necessarily, becomes subversion of the redefining attempts of competing claims to Israel's story. In this respect, Pate addresses the notion of justification (chapter 6), the "angelic liturgy" (chapter 7), monotheism, covenant, and eschatology (chapter 8), in addition to the notion of eschatological restoration in terms of adherence to halakhah (DSS) or faith in Jesus (Gospel of John) over against the embodiment of wisdom in the Mosaic law (chapter 9). Pate attempts to show that promotion of the story of the new Israel and subversion of the

old anticipates the inauguration of the "age to come," which is "synonymous with the kingdom of God" (215). Finally, Pate offers his own theological perspectives (so claimed, 231) regarding the triumph of Christianity over against the failure of the Essenes (Conclusion).

In regard to thematic coherence and the stated objectives in his Introduction, Pate provides an informative and, as is possible in one volume, comprehensive entry into two exciting bodies of literature. The book is understandable, and in most cases, responsibly defensible. Though writing a book that is massive in scope, Pate handles the material in an honest, readable fashion.

Perhaps the areas with most potential for critique involve Pate's own theological bias and his reliance on the works of N. T. Wright. For instance, early on in the book, Pate shows concern for the validity of the canon in relation to the DSS (39). However, Pate is misleading on the manner in which the DSS reflect the canonicity of the OT texts. Pate seems more interested to affirm the canon as it exists today by comparison with the DSS, rather than comment on the controversial issues regarding the status of the OT texts at Qumran as canonical within the DSS writings themselves and for the community/communities that read them (Ulrich 2000, 1:117-120).

Then again, perhaps this is due not so much to theological bias as to methodological presuppositions. Here I refer to Pate's reliance on N. T. Wright. It is no secret that Wright is critiqued on his "tendency to create an artificially unified worldview out of the complex world of first-century Judaism" (Johnson 1999, 210). I would caution the reader toward large claims attributed to Second Temple Judaism, Essenes, and even the NT itself in this book. It is not entirely clear to what extent Pate's work can be considered a sketch of NT or Essene "thought" in light of the increasing tendency toward segmentation of Second Temple Judaism into *Judaisms* of the Second Temple period.

Pate's proclivity toward sweeping claims, modeling the same tendency in Wright, is specifically noticeable in Chapter 5. Pate examines the DSS and Luke-Acts in particular. Reinterpretation of symbol and praxis by each is the topic under consideration, and as a result, the Temple is necessarily discussed. Pate's concern is to show the subversion of the symbol against the "prevailing" interpretation of Second Temple Judaism. So doing, Pate claims that Qumran's reinterpretation of the Temple "included the spiritualization of the whole cultus" (151), based on the opinion of R. A. Horsley in reference to 1QS 5:5-7; 8:4-10; 9:3-6; 4QFlor 1:1-13. This is indeed overstatement, especially in light of the Temple Scroll (11QT). 11QT, as legal literature, is not only an extended treatise on Temple construction but also God's command to build a temple. Pate himself claims 11QT, et al, as a foundational document of the Essene identity and *raison d'être* (44). Later, in chapter 8, Pate, deferring to S. Lehne, suggests this spiritualization of the Temple and cult is but an interim status for Qumran. One wonders, then, to what extent this interim status was considered replacement/spiritualization of the Jerusalem Temple by the Qumran sect and to what extent the comparison of the DSS and NT becomes more dependent on the claims rather than the evidence.

In conclusion, Pate has, on the whole, offered a thorough introduction to the interpretive worlds of the DSS and NT. Although I differ with some of Pate's interpretive conclusions, *Communities of the Last Days* nonetheless provides the reader

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with an interesting glimpse into the attempts of two bodies of literature to "retell" Israel's story. Pate's work is not without liability, and it would be helpful for the reader to evaluate the interpretive perspective of N. T. Wright so as to see more clearly Wright's permeations (claimed or unclaimed) into Pate's argument. The reader's encounter with the subtleties of Pate's research can be more responsibly considered with an understanding of the larger complexities introduced from the research of Wright.

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C. Jason Borders

Timothy H. Lim, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls in their Historical Context*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000. Pp. x + 309. \$49.95 cloth.

*The Dead Sea Scrolls in their Historical Context* is a compilation of papers presented at the University of Edinburgh Centre for Christian Origins for the conference entitled, "The Dead Sea Scrolls in their Historical Context," held on May 5-6, 1998. Two guiding questions were to be considered by contributors to the conference: 1) "How central or marginal was the community that owned these scrolls?" and 2) "Has our picture of nascent Judaism been skewed as a result of the chance discovery and intensive research into the Dead Sea Scrolls?" (1-2).

To what extent we can classify a normative, Second Temple Judaism is problematic, according to the contributors. In light of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), how is one to discern the marginality or centrality of these texts within the larger debate regarding what may be considered "normative" or "common" in Second Temple Judaism? The aim of this book is to situate the DSS "within the context of Judaism in the Second Temple period" (1), understanding the problematic nature of "Judaism" in this historical context.

The articles included in the volume are arranged into four sub-areas: 1) "The Qumran Community, Essenes and other Sects" (5), 2) "The Qumran Biblical Texts and the Masoretic Text" (65), 3) "Sectarian Law and Normative Jewish Law" (121), and 4) "Theology of the Qumran Community, Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity" (197). Emerging from the book is the sustained attempt to *locate* the DSS texts, which results in the *re-location* and/or *dislocation* of our understanding of "normative" Judaism in the Second Temple period.

Although one article cannot speak for the book as a whole, George Brooke's "E Pluribus Unum: Textual Variety and Definitive Interpretation in the Qumran Scrolls"



(107-119) is an example of the volume's concern to *locate* the DSS. The nuances of Brooke's individual contribution are beyond the scope of this review; however, Brooke shows the Qumran interpretation of biblical texts normative in form and method yet distinctive in content, i.e. the eschatological environment in which the scrolls were written is given expression through God's "singular purpose" (119). For Brooke, what that purpose is does not depend on alteration of method or form of texts but rather on alternate interpretation. Similarly, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in their Historical Context* is a glimpse into an alternate, interpretive agenda of a community relocated in Second Temple Judaism.

On the whole, the book accomplishes its aim. It is no small task to investigate such a wide array of topics and texts and present the findings as a coherent whole. This is not to say that each article anticipates other contributors' findings; however, concern for the marginality and/or centrality of the texts in question within their historical context is apparent.

My criticism of the book concerns the intended audience. The dust cover claims to avoid technical language while not appealing to "popular sensationalism." Although I found several articles to prove themselves true of this description, others require knowledge of not only biblical languages but a range of specialist vocabulary. This is not to say that those articles were not both well-written and defensible. I am simply considering the aim of the book with respect to the intended reader. Since "historiographical issues that are not normally part of the study of other ancient documents" have been raised by "widespread media coverage" of the DSS (2) and their relation to our understanding of Second Temple Judaism, audience then becomes critical if this book is intended to provide a corrective to those who would be influenced by the popular sensationalists.

On a different note, I have been prompted to re-examine the extent I consider the Qumran community *sectarian* as a result of this book. Clearly, differences exist between the Judaism of the DSS and other *Judaisms* of the Second Temple period. Yet, even within the scrolls themselves, differences in interpretation throughout the community's history are evident. Sectarianism as (very simply) *difference* can then become a problematic category. This book makes me wonder to what extent difference, for its own sake, is a helpful category in our understanding of Judaism represented in the DSS and its location within Judaism of the Second Temple period.

This book is an asset in two respects: 1) a valuable reflection of a wide range of current DSS research, and 2) a cohesive unit calling attention to our (lack of) understanding of Second Temple Judaism and its *interpreting* communities. Although a wealth of knowledge, the book's scholarly accessibility could prove a liability to the informed, popular reader.

C. Jason Borders

Al Wolters, *The Copper Scroll: Overview, Text and Translation*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996. 55 pp. \$19.95 (paper).

The *Copper Scroll* (3Q15) is an ancient list of treasures and directions to their hiding places, engraved in Hebrew on a copper roll instead of the more customary vellum or parchment. It is thought by most scholars to represent an authentic list of some portion

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of the wealth of the Jerusalem Temple (or, less likely, the wealth of the Qumran community), taken into the desert and hidden just a few years prior to the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD. All in all, it represents several tons of lost silver and gold, and the directions in the Copper Scroll are sufficiently cryptic to have prevented archaeologists and treasure seekers from discovering any of the hordes listed.

This slim volume presents an introductory essay on the *Copper Scroll*, originally prepared for publication in the Oxford *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, together with a feign bibliography on this scroll, a number of photographs of the actual sections of the *Copper Scroll*, and its Hebrew text and new English translation on facing pages.

David deSilva

Kay Marshall Strom, *A Caregiver's Survival Guide: How To Stay Healthy When Your Loved One Is Sick*, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000, pp. 153, \$9.99.

"The only true security any of us has comes from God, through the unconditional love found in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ" (138). People who are caring for chronically ill or disabled loved ones often lose their sense of security. With this book, Kay Marshall Strom attempts to help restore some of that security. She shares stories from her 10 years of experience caring for her ill husband as well as from other caregivers as she walks new caregivers through steps that will help them survive new territory. At the same time, she reminds the caregivers that God is with them every step of this new journey.

Caring for a chronically ill or disabled loved one is physically, emotionally, and spiritually draining. Many people focus on the one who is sick or disabled. That person usually receives the flowers, gifts, cards or prayers. Often forgotten is the person or persons with the primary responsibility for providing direct care. Strom had that responsibility. She understands the confusion and sometimes denial that comes with a diagnosis. She understands the changing of roles that is attendant with many debilitating diseases. The book begins at the beginning of the process--recognition that "something" is wrong. Strom and her husband saw several doctors before he was finally diagnosed with a rare degenerative disease. In her case, obtaining a diagnosis in and of itself was a relief although her husband was still denying that he had a problem. Next, she had to deal with the reality of having her husband, lover, best friend being diagnosed with a disease that has no cure, will only get worse and will alter his mental and physical functioning in the process.

It was two years before a diagnosis was finally made--chorea acanthocytosis, an extremely rare genetic condition. It was another month, several consultations and a whole stack of medical journal articles before the impact of that diagnosis sunk in: profound physical deterioration, increasing dementia, relentless progression, untreatable, incurable, fatal...(15)

In sixteen absorbing chapters, Strom shares how she survived ten years of giving care to her husband, Larry. The reader moves with her through the progression of the disease, her decision to place him in a nursing facility, his death, and the beginning of her healing process. However, as moving as Strom's story is, her story is

not the point of the book. Strom uses her story to demonstrate how to negotiate this journey. When "something" seems wrong with your loved one, whether your child, spouse, or sibling--check into the problem. And yes, checking into the problem may take some time. Your loved one may deny that anything is wrong. The first doctor may misdiagnose. When you get a second opinion, it may be a completely different opinion as to what is wrong. Once the diagnosis is definite, neither of you may want to accept it. Your life will be changed. People will want to offer advice, cures, comments intended to help--but do not. How does one handle this well-intended "help" that does not?

Strom provides practical suggestions for successfully maneuvering through the confusion that results when one's life is radically changed, sometimes gradually, sometimes very quickly as they deal with new realities. Roles will probably change. A spouse or parent may seem more like a child. Major decisions need to be made--can you continue to work and care for your loved one? What happens financially if you don't work? Can you live with your decision if you do work? Is your loved one violent? Do you have enough help? Are you taking care of you? How do you take care of you and not appear selfish? How do you handle the feelings of resentment and anger that will surface? What do I look for in a good adult daycare program or nursing facility? If I have to use a nursing facility, do I have to sell my home? Strom answers these questions and many more. And she answers them from a Christian perspective. She continually reminds her readers that we can do all things through Christ. For Strom, staying close to God, finding the blessings in her situation, was what helped her survive.

There are other books that provide some of the information that Strom does. The doctor currently treating my father for his dementia recommended *The 36-Hour Day: A Family Guide to Caring for Persons with Alzheimer Disease, Related Dementing Illnesses, and Memory Loss in Later Life* by Nancy Mace and Peter Rabins. Until I read *A Caregiver's Survival Guide*, I agreed with the excerpts quoted on the cover that extolled its virtues. However, it does not have the personal and Christian perspective that Strom offers. Mace and Rabins can tell me that others also feel helpless, angry, trapped, and resentful. Strom tells me that *she* felt that way, lived through those feelings, and then refers me to scripture that helped her through those feelings. I highly recommend Strom's book for anyone who has a loved one who is seriously ill or disabled whether or not the reader is the primary caregiver. I highly recommend this book for anyone--counselors, pastors, friends, relatives, Christian, non-Christian--who may find themselves trying to support a caregiver. Strom reminds the reader who is a caregiver that he or she is not alone either naturally or spiritually. Non-caregivers will better understand the turmoil the caregiver experiences and will be better prepared to offer true assistance--possibly more often. Strom's testimony is such an effective one that it will encourage Christian readers and perhaps convince non-Christians to become seekers.

Katherine A. Simmons



Philip Crosby, *The Absolutes of Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996. 144 pp., \$16.50.

Finally, a wise and readable text on leadership in under 125 pages. Crosby defines leadership as “deliberately causing people-driven actions in a planned fashion for the purpose of accomplishing the leader’s agenda” (p. 2). The author outlines five styles of leadership that readers can use to quickly assess the approach used personally and by their CEO. They are:

The Destructor - disruption without a reason\*

The Procrastinator - paralysis due to analysis

The Caretaker - if it ain’t broke don’t fix it

The Preparer - plan, do, check, act

The Accomplisher - ready, fire, aim

(\*The phrases following each leadership description are borrowed from a variety of sources for emphasis.)

Although Crosby clearly believes that the Accomplisher is the most effective leadership style, it would seem from my experience that parts of each of the styles might coalesce into a more integrated approach to leadership. Taking action toward fulfilling the mission and vision of an organization is the compelling purpose for leaders, but finding the proper balance in the leadership styles Crosby purposes becomes the art in leadership.

Crosby lists the *Absolutes of Leadership* as:

- A clear agenda - outline goals and strategies
- A personal philosophy - workable and understandable
- Enduring relationships - these take thought and work
- Worldliness - utilize technology to be informed about and to respect global cultures

(p.3), and then he takes the first half of the book to describe what he means by each of these absolutes.

The second half of the book focuses on leaders and such things as finance, quality, customers, suppliers, employees, and bosses. Crosby reminds us that “the leader is the only one who can make quality happen” (p. 76). The author is a recognized authority on how to define and implement quality in organizations, and this text is well worth reading.

Crosby advocates defining quality performance measures and monitoring them to improve the quality of all the organization does. Non-profit organizations will utilize different performance measures than profit-making organizations, but the process for determining what these measures will be is a very similar one. One person doesn’t do this, but a committee of coworkers who “want to give the organization their all” (p. 107).

The wisdom of many years of leadership practice flows easily from Mr. Crosby’s words, and younger leaders can learn a lot from the examples and stories woven throughout this short text.

Mary Ellen Drushal, Ashland University

Ross S. Moxley, *Leadership & Spirit: Breathing New Vitality and Energy Into Individuals and Organizations*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass & Center for Creative Leadership, 2000, 208 pp., \$35.00.

Why has it taken so long for authors and consultants to acknowledge the spiritual dimension of leadership development? Since Bolman & Deal wrote *Leading with Soul: An Uncommon Journey of Spirit* in 1995, other authors are putting words to what they have sensed for years.

Pick up any child development text and five areas are always listed that describe a well-balanced individual: social, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and physical. Luke 10:27-28 describes the same series of developmental areas for those who will inherit eternal life: "love the Lord your God with all your heart (emotional), with all your soul (spiritual), with all your strength (physical), with all your mind (intellectual), and your neighbor as yourself (social)." Leaders must find balance in their lives and practice being who they most deeply are, if they intend to lead individuals and organizations into a vital and dynamic future.

Moxley acknowledges that writing this text caused him to "dig deeply, to consider again my inner life and my outer work" (p. xviii), which is the reflective practice that all leaders should engage in to seek perspective in who they are, what they do, and God's purpose in all that is accomplished. There is a better way to lead people than the traditional top-down, command-and-control, executive-as-leader model. Moxley discusses the problems that traditional leaders have with the use of coercive power, the problems with ego, and the dark side of executives. Moxley provides several "speedbumps" in the way of vignettes or organizations and individuals within them to cause the reader to reflect on what they do. He believes that: "employees want to be involved in the activity of leadership...that they want to find meaning and purpose in what they do... to use all of their energies, to use their whole self, in their work... that they have a need to be seen as individuals, and they want to be involved in community" pp. 11-15).

Leaders who perceive themselves as the executive-as-leader tend to micromanage the task even though they are giving the appearance to others of letting go of the details. This very act subverts the sense of respect and community that exists in the organization. Moxley proposes a partnership model of leadership where leadership is understood as a verb rather than a noun (p. 73). He outlines five requirements for this model to work effectively:

- balance of power
- shared purpose
- shared responsibility and accountability
- respect for the person
- partnering in the nitty-gritty

and then reminds the readers that "In authentic partnerships and communities, individuals flourish. But the importance of relationships and community is also acknowledged and honored (p. 92).

Moxley contrasts the two models of leadership, executive-as-leader and partnership-as-leader and purports that both leaders and followers should examine themselves and determine how best to honor the differences that exist among us.

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We learn from our experiences in leadership and this learning is reflected in the changes leaders make over time in how we lead. Some executive-as-leaders cannot or will not change, because they are comfortable doing the things they know to do. Susan Muto, the Executive Director of The Epiphany Association in Pittsburgh, often reminds us that we are human beings, not human doings. Who we are as leaders is much more important than what we do as leaders.

Moxley reminds us that many of us fall prey to the tyranny of the oughts (you ought to be a researcher, a pastor, or an attorney) when we pay no attention to our true selves and calling. When we follow the oughts instead of the calling, we extend the abuse to our co-workers who become our followers.

All our lives we are taught to trust reality. "If I can touch it, see it, hear it, taste it, smell it, then it is real" (p. 25). But spirit cannot be empirically documented. Self-awareness and self-nurturing are critical components for practicing partnerships-as-leaders, but it is scary and unsettling to take this inner journey of spirit in leadership.

Wholeness and balance is the reward for taking this life-long journey and the outcome is the ability to develop partnerships and community in organizations who desperately need it. Do not read this book unless you truly desire to change and develop your leadership capabilities from the inside out. Take the road less traveled. Executives-as-leaders abound, even in non-profit organizations, and there is a better way to lead organizations and people.

Mary Ellen Drushal

David S. Young, *Servant Leadership for Church Renewal: Shepherds by the Living Springs*, Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1999. 176 p. \$12.99.

Churchs and their leadership are thirsty for living waters. Two crucial themes about this reality are Servant Leadership, as a new paradigm of ministry closer to Jesus', and Church Renewal, which is one of the greatest needs of contemporary Christianity. Young meets an actual need by crystallizing a powerful tool for ministry, providing a vital link between these two concepts in *Servant Leadership for Church Renewal: Shepherds by the Living Springs*.

The author introduces the book with a powerful image of sheepdogs, sheep, living waters, and a Shepherd. These convey effectively the very heart of the book's message, and compel the reader to immerse herself into the reading. One of the foundational verses on which Young founded the model of servant leadership for church renewal is Revelation 7,17: "The Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water."

The book is arranged in eight very readable and clear chapters, developing the concepts through practical steps to be followed. Young starts with the needed vision for leadership arriving at the goal of faith transformation. Along the way, there are profound and operative insights that have to do with pillar issues for Church renewal, such as, the leaders' spiritual formation, carrying and sustaining the vision, empowering leaders, funding servant structures, serving and being served, and team building and functioning.

The author unfolds essential themes with a solid theology, helpful use of images, along with a holistic conception of the three journeys needed both for personal



and corporate spiritual growth (ch. 2). These paths are the upward journey to God as the source and reason of life, the inward journey to self-understanding by identifying the strengths and needs, and the outward journey of outreach to the community.

A remarkable virtue of Young is his down-to-earth approach expressed by giving not only a biblically based method to church renewal, but also by addressing the organization of this enterprise, and making us aware of, and giving advice for hardships that a leader is surely going to face. Moreover, the book has contributive resources such as reference notes, a recommended bibliography for each chapter, and worksheets (like "developing a team," "assessment of needs," "envisioning a plan of renewal," or "implementing a plan of renewal").

I unreservedly recommend the book for Seminary students, pastors and lay leaders of churches. I also believe that what Young proposes is applicable for the congregations of the Brethren Church in Argentina, most of them being small churches with an urgent need of church renewal lead by a servant leader who shepherds God's people to living waters.

The book is remarkably free from errors though with a small exception on p. 53 where the reference should be Revelations 7,9-17 instead of 7.9-19.

Young's book is a very valuable resource for today's leadership. Hence it is worth being read and thoroughly used. Servant leaders are those who by listening to God's voice are able to lead the church to the very source of life and empowerment, that is, to the powerful renewing living springs of the Holy Spirit. The Lamb of God was transformed in the Shepherd. Let us become the kind of servants who understand the nature of our call.

Marcela A. Rivero

Paul S. Fiddes, 1999. *Freedom and Limit: A Dialogue between Literature and Christian Doctrine*. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press.

For any student of theology and lover of literature this is a "must read". It is a compelling study of the interaction and interrelationships between theology and literature and the various ways in which writers have explored theological concepts. It is also an example of the ways in which a theologian may interpret literature through the lens of the Christian faith and how the study of literature can enrich the study of theology. It is a study of literature in light of theological discourse, the interpretation of literature through the eyes of the Christian. By necessity it is an examination of literary symbols and metaphors, values and beliefs, which have their origins in the story of Christ and the way in which writers of secular literature have appropriated these to invest them with further meaning for the reader.

As a student of English Literature I have been amazed at how often a poet, playwright or novelist has been able to capture a theological idea, explore it from a highly personal perspective and present it as testimony to the activity of God in the secular world and in their lives. How often is the sacred world made manifest in the secular world of literature and ideas? How alert are Christians to the possibilities for developing and nurturing the spiritual life through the reading and study of literature? Literature invites the reader to participate

in lives other than our own which expands our range of consciousness, extends our experience of God, changes our perspective and which can lead us to God.

For example, the story of Jesus makes particular experience and feelings possible because the story shapes the reader's imagination, invites the reader's participation in the realm of the imagination, and thereby enables the reader to speak a language inherently of God. The story points the reader to "a divine story-teller who is the God of the future, who is always free to do new things and bring new reality into being" (20). As a result, the story structures the lives of the readers/believers, but presents challenges, possibilities, opportunities for the future. As the reader reaches out in the imagination towards a new world it is only because God is reaching out toward humanity and in partnership that new world can be realized. In a sense it is a form of incarnation, an invitation to participate in divine imagination which leaves room for human originality. "So even the fulfilment of divine purpose in the incarnate Christ has the character of promise, of beginning as well as end" (46).

Fiddes spends an entire chapter discussing the structure of the Christian story. It takes a U-shaped form encompassing fall from perfection to alienation and return to perfection again. After exploring the story of Christ as the prototypical narrative form, Shakespeare provides the literary paradigm, because he is the writer who most imitates this structure, occupying and exploring the boundaries between comedy and tragedy, healing and curse, alienation and restoration. The happy endings of the comedies suggest aspects of the new world to come; the tragedies end with wasted lives which we regret. "Each overlaps with the other, bearing witness to the Great Story of the God who includes both pain and bliss in his own life" (82).

Following this protracted introduction comes a masterly analysis of the work of William Blake whose poetry criticized the dominance of human reason over imagination, the rule of law over the spirit, the imagination, passion. For Blake law is stifling because it imposes a false sense of guilt. The cross is not a punishment for the ancient sin of Adam finally inflicted by a legalistic God, but the redeeming power of sympathy and compassion here and now. Humanity is held prisoner by the hegemony of rational law; the release of humankind into new life is assured by the power of imagination, which cannot be fully tamed, least of all by the God of the Deists, with His mathematical and technical skills.

D.H. Lawrence was greatly concerned with the disintegration of human personality as a result of cultural stress. The exploration of relationships is a particular focus of Lawrence for it is in relationships that broken human personality can be restored to perfection. As a writer he was in search of the wholeness or integrity of the self and he suggested that "Jesus loved mankind for what it might be, free and limitless" (147), which is the search Lawrence undertakes in his writing. Love in all manner of manifestations is a particular emphasis of Lawrence, because love is the locus for the denial of the self in favor of the lover and the encouragement of the lover to be fully her/himself. For Lawrence, "love means a sharing of experience and hence a participation in the suffering of another" (149) which opens up the participants in a relationship to the possibilities God has for them and the world. Omniscience then, according to Lawrence, is God's knowledge of possibilities, but these have to be realized by human beings.

Fiddes' studies of Iris Murdoch and William Golding are particularly interesting. In Murdoch's reality art is the representation of revelation, grace, salvation and imago dei; relationships are the place where the self can be put to death and human suffering confronted as the means by which the self can indeed die. For Murdoch, "God is present in the world in a mode of weakness and suffering", and "It is because God really participates in the human experience of pain and death that he is not dead - ie irrelevant - to the world" (193). God is not absent but hidden for the sake of human freedom. It is suffering which is a form of revelation and the individual's free participation in the suffering of Christ which is the means of revelation.

The characters created by William Golding find God in the heart of darkness. Primitive landscapes seem to require primeval behavior, where the brutal human nature clashes with the cultural norms and values of civilization. For Golding, the human fall into sin is not a fall into freedom as might be expected, because the life in sin is limited by a sense of guilt. But Golding suggests the necessity for a dalliance with this sinfulness in order to fully recognize the enemy. Besides it is this guilt which provides the possibility of forgiveness, for conscience is the first recollection of the presence of grace, the first reminder of divinity dwelling amongst humankind and participating in each individual life.

How then to define freedom and limit after this stunning read. Simple. Freedom can best be described as spiritual vision, the unleashing of imagination, a daily journey of daily revelations, a life spent in pilgrimage searching for and enjoying the presence of God in every aspect of the human existence, the exploration of possibilities, rising to the challenge of being an individual called by God. We are only limited by the pull of the flesh.

Dorothy Penny-Larter

James Sire, *Habits of the Mind*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000. 224 pp.

What is an intellectual? Is it proper for a Christian to also be an intellectual? Can the intellectual life be a Christian calling? Are there certain moral responsibilities for the so-called Christian intellectual? James Sire, former editor of InterVarsity Press and author of the well-circulated book on worldviews, *The Universe Next Door*, has written a new book, *Habits of the Mind*, focusing on the nature of the intellectual life for the Christian. He defines an intellectual as

one who loves ideas, is dedicated to clarifying them, developing them, criticizing them, turning them over and over, seeing their implications, stacking them atop one another, arranging them, sitting silent while new ideas pop up and old ones seem to rearrange themselves, playing with them, punning with their terminology, laughing at them, watching them clash, picking up the pieces, starting over, judging them, withholding judgement about them, changing them, bringing them into contact with their counterparts in other systems of thought, inviting them to dine and have a ball but also suiting them for service in workaday life.

And for the Christian it is all this "to the glory of God."

The person chosen by Sire to model the Christian intellectual life is John Henry Newman of whom Sire says, "I know of no Christian thinker - scholar, cleric, or



both, as Newman was - who has given us such a vivid picture of the 'perfection' toward which all Christians should aspire to the limit of their ability." In consecutive chapters Sire describes how Newman is an intellectual and how Newman views the intellect. Sire uses numerous lengthy quotes from Newman which demonstrate the value of the intellect, of holiness, and of certainty in order to provide a vision of the perfected intellect for the purpose of bringing order to knowledge. This section is insightful regarding Newman but the quotes are quite extensive and take a high level of concentration to follow. The section concludes with Newman's valuable warnings of the dangers of the intellect. Sire's next chapter focuses on how thinking feels. This chapter attempts to clarify his earlier definition of the intellectual, but adds little to the rest of the book.

The middle of the book develops the relationship between knowledge and morality, a topic that most Christians have little understanding of and which was the section this reviewer considered Sire's best and most valuable. For Sire the moral intellectual life for the Christian is inseparable from the practical life of the Christian. One must think through the truth and actively live it out to be a Christian intellectual. He states "we only know what we act on" and "we only believe what we obey." His section on the intellectual virtues of constancy, patience, perseverance, courage, and humility encourages the reader to understand how good thought is manifested in virtuous actions. For example, he tells the reader that if beliefs are false it may take courage to reassess or abandon the beliefs or it may take courage to speak forth a new discovery into a generation where the ideas may be viewed as "heretical." This theme of thought and action knits together much of what Sire has to say in this book.

Sire provides practical ways to improve one's intellectual thinking through such means as the use of solitude and silence, through what he calls lateral thinking, and through removing the barriers to intensive thinking which he describes. He even makes reference to meditative thinking as prescribed by Martine Heidegger. Continuing the theme of improving thinking, the following chapter focuses on improving thinking through reading (a chapter that could be valuable in itself if published separately as a tract).

Mark Hamilton, Ashland University

Jeffrey Schultz and John G. West, Jr., eds. *The C.S. Lewis Readers' Encyclopedia*, Zondervan Publishing House, 1998, 464 pp.

This massive effort is an exhaustive guide to the life and writings of C.S. Lewis, including descriptions of all of Lewis' works, brief biographies of everyone he wrote about or knew well (I particularly enjoyed the updates on David and Douglas Gresham), and summaries of seemingly all of the ideas or concepts found anywhere in Lewis' writings. The editors have gathered contributed materials from a great variety of writers from very diverse backgrounds with expertise on Lewis and the topics related to Lewis, and placed them in a one-volume encyclopedia.

The fifty-seven page biography by John Bremer at the front of the book is quite detailed and impressive. Bremer includes material that this writer did not know about Lewis even after reading several full-length biographies on Lewis. Bremer

provides solid information on Lewis' life but the focus is on Lewis's literary career and how Lewis' works were received in his lifetime.

The alphabetized encyclopedia covers everything in Lewis' writing from *The Abolition of Man* to Yeats and from angels to women. The book is not easily read from cover to cover because of its encyclopedic structure, nevertheless, because of the amount of fascinating material in it and the depth of many of the topics covered, I found myself doing just that, reading through topic after topic in consecutive order. Many of the subjects covered are like reading independent articles on Lewis. For example there are nine full pages describing the letters of Lewis, three pages on Literary Criticism and Theory, and two pages on *The Screwtape Letters*. There are also numerous column or page length topical summaries of Lewis' view on such subjects as imagination, fantasy, satire, education, heaven, or hell. There are short paragraphs summarizing the multitude of Lewis' brief articles, such as "Myth Becomes Fact" or "Is Theism Important? A Reply." Charts listing all of Lewis' book dedicatees, all of the plays and films about Lewis, and charts on the versions of the Chronicles of Narnia are also included. The reader can discover what Lewis meant by chronological snobbery, Blimpophobia, or the Anthroposophy of Rudolf Steiner that was embraced by Lewis' close friend Owen Barfield. One can examine the list of books from a 1962 article where Lewis posted the ten books that most influenced his philosophy of life.

This encyclopedia is packed with scholarly information, yet is also surprisingly readable. It has become a great resource for my lectures and college courses on Lewis. Any person who wants to engage Lewis in further study, who wants further information on a subject Lewis speaks about or who wants to know where in Lewis' primary works to find his comments on various topics, then this text is an invaluable tool. It is an excellent compliment to the *Quotable Lewis*, edited by Wayne Martindale and Jerry Root in 1989, where Lewis is directly quoted on various topics in alphabetized order.

Mark Hamilton

#### Book Notes

##### Brief reviews by the editor

John W. Miller, *The Origins of the Bible: Rethinking Canon History*. Theological Inquiries. New York/ Mahwah: Paulist, 1994. 250 pp., paperback, \$18.95.

Canon, the extent and content of Scripture, is an important and vexing problem, as evidenced by disagreements between folks like Marcion, Luther, the Mormons, and the Taliban. Miller holds that the reform movement under Ezra and Nehemiah was key for the canonization of the Hebrew scriptures. The book concludes with an annotated bibliography. For college and seminary libraries.

Duane Christensen, *Bible 101: God's Story in Human History*. N. Richland Hills, TX: D & F Scott Publishing, 1998. xv + 248 pp., paperback, \$19.95.

This is a textbook introducing the Word of God as it became canon in the Bible, its transmission history, and its authority. Aimed toward laity or entry level

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classes, it uses some excellent pedagogical approaches particularly aimed at engaging the reader in critical thought. Church, college and seminary libraries will find this volume of use.

Albert H. Baylis, *From Creation to the Cross: Understanding the First Half of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996. 392 pp., hardcover, \$24.99.

A quick run through the OT with useful timelines, maps, interaction questions, and suggested readings for each section. Coming from a conservative position, it at least acknowledges some critical issues (e.g. the date of the Exodus and Daniel) while virtually ignoring others (e.g. the authorship of the Pentateuch and of Isaiah). Useful for an introductory college or seminary level course. This volume would find a place in church, college and seminary libraries.

Henry J. Flanders, Jr., Robert W. Crapps, David A. Smith, *People of the Covenant: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. 562 pp., hardcover, \$59.95.

A beginning level introduction to the OT and its study from a 'moderate' Southern Baptist perspective. Following chapters on interpretation and history-geography, the book proceeds chronologically. A critically 'mainline' approach as regards such matters as Pentateuchal authorship (espousing the Documentary Hypothesis) and a late date Daniel, it would be very useful text for an introductory college level course if accompanied by careful teacher input, as is true for every textbook choice. The price makes it somewhat prohibitive, however. The volume should be in college and seminary libraries.

Larry R. Helyer, *Yesterday, Today and Forever: The Continuing Relevance of the Old Testament*. Salem, WI: Sheffield Publishing Company, 1996. xii + 459 pp., paperback, \$23.95.

An interesting elementary introduction united by following several motifs such as the plan of salvation, faith and politics, faith and ethics, and faith and the future through the OT. While looking at content and context, this volume is more theological and applicational than most of its genre. It should serve its purpose well, and would be appropriate from college and seminary libraries. It is unfortunate, however, that so many conservative institutions such as publishers, and even colleges, see no ethical problem in adopting the name of already established and respected endeavors.

Victor H. Matthews and James C. Moyer, *The Old Testament: Text and Context*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997. ix + 308 pp., hardcover, \$29.95.

A well-conceived, though very brief, elementary introduction to the OT, a chronological survey of the material follows an introduction to tools of bibliography and method. They follow the uniting themes of covenant, universalism, wisdom and remnant. Strong on ancient Near Eastern context, the authors provide helps such as study



questions and a glossary. Colleges and seminaries should have the volume in their libraries.

Watson E. Mills, Richard F. Wilson, ed., *Pentateuch/Torah*. Mercer Commentary on the Bible Vol. 1. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1998. lviii + 226 pp., \$19.95.

This volume, from a moderate Baptist press, brings together 10 articles on the Pentateuch from the *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible* (1997) and commentaries from the *Mercer Commentary on the Bible* (1994). It shows a mainline critical approach to Scripture, and would serve as a good student introduction to that particular perspective. The commentary lacks depth, due to its nature and audience, so readers will be quickly moved to more in depth studies. For college and seminary libraries.

C. Houtman, *Der Pentateuch: Die Geschichte seiner Erforschung neben einer Auswertung*. Biblical Exegesis and Theology 9. Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994. xxii + 472 pp., paperback.

A very useful, detailed discussion of the question of Pentateuchal authorship and interpretation from the time of Christ up to the time of writing. The volume provides a needed update to H-J Kraus, *Geschichte der historisch-kritischen Erforschung des Alten Testaments*. All specialized biblical studies libraries need to have this book.

Duane L. Christensen, *Bible 101: The Torah: A Study Guide*. N. Richland Hills, TX: D & F Scott Publishing, 1998. xxii + 105 pp., paperback, \$15.95.

This guide is one of six comprising a two-semester, undergraduate introduction to Bible course. It includes actual syllabus components, an introduction to inductive Bible study, and a survey of each of the Pentateuchal books. Considerable attention is given to literary structure, chiastic structures in particular. Study questions are scattered throughout, and some, called 'concept checks' are answered in the back. Good for personal, church, college and seminary libraries.

M. Vervenne and J. Lust, ed., *Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic Literature: Festschrift C.H.W. Brekelmans*. BETL 133. Leuven: University Press/Peeters, 1997. xi + 637 pp., paperback, \$97.00.

A volume in honor of a retired professor from the Catholic University in Leuven, the volume brings together 28 leading scholars writing in English, German, Spanish and French. The volume is divided into sections on Deuteronomy, the Deuteronomistic History, Pentateuchal composition and the deuteronomistic traditions, and miscellaneous topics unrelated to the volume title. For academic and specialist libraries.

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Mark J. Boda, *Praying the Tradition: The Origin and Use of Tradition in Nehemiah 9*. BZAW 277. Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1999. xiii + 284 pp., hardcover, 176 DM (approx. \$85.00).

This Oxford University PhD thesis explores the important issue of how biblical texts employ earlier material, or intertextuality. Among other things, he finds his research to indicate that the author used an already completed Pentateuch similar to our own text. This is not a complete study of the chapter since it does not fully address literary concerns such as structure and the relationship of the chapter with the book as a whole, but it does help in understanding the text. For academic and specialist libraries due to its use of untranslated Hebrew.

Anneke Kaai and Eugene H. Peterson, *The Psalms: An Artist's Impression*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1999. 55 pp., hardcover, \$19.99.

A visual feast of 25 mainly abstract paintings, each of which are accompanied by the sections from Psalms which inspired them, taken from Peterson's translation, *The Message*. They are also accompanied by brief individual discussions of each work. The book serves as a welcome reminder that exegesis of a text need not only be text-bound. A good volume for one's coffee table, church and even public library.

Mark E. Cohen, *The Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East*. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1993. Xxiii + 504 pp., hardcover, \$37.50.

The historical study of the OT soon comes across problems with the calendric systems of Israel and the ancient Near East. Cohen here explores the cultic calendar, that is the timing of various religious festivals and other periodic observances. He divides the study chronologically (3<sup>rd</sup> millennium, early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium, and second and first millennia BC), with a concluding chapter on festival themes. The volume is somewhat mistitled, since Egypt and the Hittites are not covered, but texts from Sumer, Akkad, Mari, Elam, Alalakh, Ugarit, and Israel (the Gezer Calendar being the sole representative) are studied. For academic and specialist libraries.

John H. Walvoord, *Prophecy in the New Millennium: A Fresh Look at Future Events*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2001. 176 pp., paperback, \$10.99.

This volume shows that the old dispensationalism is unchanged for the new millennium. Written by a doyen of this hermeneutical approach, the former president of Dallas Theological Seminary, it is a very popular level overview using no secondary sources. Providing no hermeneutical justification for the approach, nor adequate indication that there are alternative hermeneutical views, one wonders if speaking *ex cathedra* is not solely a Catholic doctrine. For college and seminary libraries.

John J. McDermott, *What are they Saying about the Formation of Israel?* Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1998. iv + 115 pp., paperback, \$10.95.

Addressing one of the most controversial historical issues facing OT scholarship, McDermott discusses available evidence and notes the 3 'classical' models of conquest, peaceful infiltration, and social revolution and himself suggests that Israel developed from a gradual Canaanite resettlement. He states that the discovery of future texts could lead to modification of this view, which is ironic since an already discovered text, the Bible, itself suggests that his approach needs modification. For seminary and specialist libraries.

Elizabeth Achtemeier, *Preaching Hard Texts of the Old Testament*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998. ix + 192 pp., paperback, \$14.95.

Some texts from both Testaments are hard to preach for various reasons, including their presentation of God which makes us uncomfortable. While this might be our problem rather than that of Scripture, it is still difficult to know how to handle some texts. While not attempting to be exhaustive, Achtemeier looks at 32 passages from the aspects of 'plumbing the text' (exegesis) and 'forming the sermon' (interpretation and application). Useful in providing examples of interpretation, the volume will find a place in seminary libraries.

William Horbury, ed., *Hebrew Study from Ezra to Ben-Yehuda*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999. xiv + 337 pp., hardcover, \$69.95.

A useful series of studies of the history of the study and preservation of Hebrew from the Persian period through the modern period. Written by 22 scholars who teach in Britain, the Netherlands and Germany, the volume should find a place in specialist OT and Semitics libraries.

Jacob Neusner and William S. Green, ed., *Dictionary of Judaism in the Biblical Period: 450 B.C.E. to 600 C.E.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999. xxvi + 693 pp. hardcover, \$59.95

An unmodified reprint of the 2 volume work with the same title published in 1996 by MacMillan. Lacking any updating, and still lacking any bibliographic resources, libraries with the first edition need not purchase this. It is a useful, popular level reference volume which should at least in some form be in college and seminary libraries.

R. Samuel Thorpe, *A Handbook for Basic Biblical Exegesis*. Lanham MD/ Oxford: University Press of America, 1999. ix + 85 pp., paperback, \$17.50.

A basic outline of exegesis with steps to cover for translation, textual analysis, linguistic, historical and literary analysis, theological interpretation, and application. Each step has examples and is accompanied by a bibliography. Appendices touch on English Bible translations, ancient texts and versions, examples of the Hebrew, Greek and English of



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selections from Numbers and Luke, a summary of the steps, a useful sample exegetical paper, and a complete bibliography. While students will find the volume useful, they will probably find that G. Fee, *NT Exegesis* and D. Stuart, *OT Exegesis* are more so, and cheaper.

Stanley E. Porter and Richard S. Hess, *Translating the Bible: Problems and Prospects*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 173. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999. 336 pp., hardcover, \$85.00.

13 articles by 11 scholars teaching in Britain, Canada, and the US. The three sections include: theory and method, discussing the Contemporary English Version, the responsibility of the translator toward reader or author (literal vs dynamic approaches), the LXX translational traditions today, and inspiration and translation; OT, with one translator's personal reflections, and discussions on Joshua and Judges 1–5; NT, looking at translation in the process of exegesis, the relevance of literary foregrounding for translation and interpretation, verbal tense and aspect, Philemon, and the differences between original and canonical texts. For academic and specialist libraries.

J. S. LaFontaine, *Speak of the Devil: Tales of Satanic Abuse in Contemporary England*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. xi + 224 pp., hardback/paper, \$64.95/15.95.

Unfortunately, the topic of sexual and ritual abuse is too important to ignore, as has been the approach by many in the past. This British social anthropologist sets out to explore the topic, following a topic raised by her previous report on ritual abuse in Britain. Linking ritual abuse to witchcraft such as that alleged at Salem allows her too easily to counter the former by association with the latter. Her blanket denial of organized ritual abuse seems to ignore available evidence. For academic libraries and those with specific interest in pastoral care issues.

Richard Abanes, *American Militias: Rebellion, Racism & Religion*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996. x + 296 pp., paperback, np.

Although unfortunately out of print due to the tardiness of this note, this volume is all too relevant in the light of recent terrorist activities undertaken by religious fringe elements. Here is the necessary reminder that bigotry is not just elsewhere, but is right in our own heartland. The volume deserves a place in church and academic libraries.

Walter A. Elwell and J. D. Weaver, *Bible Interpreters of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: A Selection of Evangelical Voices*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1999. 447 pp., paperback, \$24.99.

35 Caucasian (except for 1), male (except for 1) biblical interpreters are provided with a biography, their scholarly development, an evaluation of their contributions, and a bibliography of primary sources. Of possible use as a reference volume, its actual audience is not clear. For seminary libraries.

Gil Alexander-Moegerle, *James Dobson's War on America*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1997. 306 pp., hardcover, \$29.00.

Written by a co-founder with Dobson of Focus on the Family, this volume seeks to critique some of his theologically and politically conservative beliefs and practices. While well-founded critique of any leader is necessary and can be valuable, one must also ask whether a study by a former, apparently disgruntled, employee might be swayed in ways a more neutral critic might avoid. After careful evaluation, the volume could find a place in church and academic collections.

C. Dennis McKinsey, *Biblical Errancy: A Reference Guide*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2000. 852 pp., hardcover, \$135.00.

A curious book intended to provide ammunition against those who believe in scripture. Arranged alphabetically by topic from abortion to works, passages which are deemed most problematic are marked. This is a good example of why a basic understanding of hermeneutics and exegetical method can spare one a lot of grief. Not suitable for many libraries, unless as a resource for apologetics courses, and then the price far outweighs its marginal usefulness.

Nicholas Wolterstorff, *John Locke and the Ethics of Belief*. Cambridge Studies in Religion and Critical Thought. New York/ Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. xxi + 248 pp., hardcover and paperback, \$59.95/ 19.95.

Wolterstorff, one of the world's leading philosophers who is also an evangelical, studies the thought of one of the leading Enlightenment philosophers. Locke argues against belief based on tradition but rather belief based on reason. Wolterstorff discusses the debate between Locke and Hume, comparing their approaches to that of Descartes. For academic and specialist libraries.

D. G. Hart and R. Albert Mohler, Jr., *Theological Education in the Evangelical Tradition*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1996. 320 pp., paperback, \$24.99.

This book well reflects its title. In 5 parts by 18 authors, the volume looks at the breadth of the evangelical movement (Baptist, early Methodist Episcopal, Holiness, and Presbyterian and Methodist traditions) as it relates to theological education, spiritual formation and theological education, women and theological education, church-academy relations (particularly looking at England, the Netherlands and Canada), and theological education's future. There is also a 7 page bibliographic essay. For seminary and specialist libraries.

## Book Reviews

Dennis D. Martin, translator, *Carthusian Spirituality: The Writings of Hugh of Balma and Guigo de Ponte*. The Classics of Western Spirituality. New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1997. xxiv + 356 pp., paperback, \$23.00.

The Carthusians rose in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and especially flourished three centuries later, immediately following the writing of these two authors. The book begins with a 66 page introduction and closes with almost a hundred pages of notes and bibliography. Hugh's own words could summarize the aim of the volume: "This book aims to attend to how the soul might aspire with all her heart to union with the Bridegroom" (119). Part of an extensive series from across the Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, Jewish, and other traditions, this volume should be in specialist libraries.











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## ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

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### VOLUME XXXIV

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## Editor's Introduction

We at Ashland Theological Seminary pray that you have experienced God's presence in your lives and ministries as we have at the Seminary over the past year. God has blessed our community by adding to it students, faculty, and programs. Two newest faculty members are Dr Wyndy Corbin who has joined is in the area of ethics, and Dr Bill Payne who will be teaching missions and evangelism. These are areas of vital importance to the church, and thus to our instructional mission at Seminary, so these two well-qualified individuals are very welcome.

As regards program, this year saw the successful start of a new concentration in our Doctor of Ministry degree offerings. It is in Formational Counseling, which is described as "a ministry of Christian caregiving that integrates pastoral care, spiritual direction, and Spirit-directed counseling with a view to bringing hope, healing and spiritual well-being to broken people" (see the degree discussion on the Seminary website, [www.ashland.edu/seminary](http://www.ashland.edu/seminary)). The program is unparalleled, and has received tremendous interest from across the country.

This year's Fall Lecture Series at ATS featured Dr Clark Pinnock, recently retired from a position as professor of theology at McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario. He spoke on the topic of the openness of God, a controversial topic among evangelicals today. We publish a paper from him explaining his view on some of the issues involved. We also bring to you a summary of a presentation given to Ashland faculty by Dr Brenda Colijn that clearly lays out some of the issues involved in this topic, and the relationships between the openness approach and classical Arminianism on the one hand and Calvinism on the other. We hope to have other responses from differing perspectives in a future issue.

We trust that you will benefit from the other articles and reviews which we are pleased to bring to you. We also hope that you will continue to pray God's blessing, not only on us institutionally, but also on our alumni and the important ministries in which they are involved.

David W. B.

## Introductory Thoughts to This Volume

As the editor of this volume indicates, several articles appear in these pages related to the visit of Dr. Clark Pinnock to Ashland Theological Seminary as our 1992 Lecture Series speaker. Just as this topic has generated much controversy in the wider evangelical community, so there have been some who have questioned the seminary's decision to host Dr. Pinnock.

There are a number of reasons why his visit represents the best of our heritage heirs of the Reformation and of Anabaptism and Pietism, as well as our commitment to the spirit of modern evangelicalism.

We share with the Reformers the conviction that the church must always be in process of reforming itself. We as Protestants reject the idea of allowing any human authorities, whether creeds, tradition, or theological systems, to have equal authority with Scripture. This means that we as children of the Reformers must constantly be testing our doctrine and life against the touchstone of Scripture. We therefore ought to be weighing beliefs like open theism against the truth of Scripture both to see where they may stray from Scripture but also where it may lead us to a more biblical position.

Both Anabaptism and Pietism believe that truth is to be found in the dynamic engagement of Scripture, the outer Word, and the Holy Spirit, the inner Word. Rejecting the idea that theology had spoken the last word on truth, representatives of these movements continued to search Scripture, under the Spirit's guidance, in order to become more fully conformed to the image of the Living Word, Jesus Christ, in thought and deed. We model this heritage when we continue to assess beliefs like open theism in the light of the inner and outer Words.

Modern evangelicalism was born in the 1940s in the wake of the liberal-fundamentalist controversy. Scholars like E. J. Carnell, Carl F. H. Henry, and George M. Ladd were convinced that the best way to answer the challenge of liberalism was not the "circle-the-wagons" mentality of the fundamentalists but through a firsthand knowledge of liberalism. Such evangelicals therefore studied at liberal institutions and read the works of those with whom they disagreed. Evangelicalism is at its best when it does not fear to engage in an open and honest discourse with those with whom it may disagree. We seek to carry on this tradition of evangelical scholarship at the seminary.

We are being true to the best of all of these facets of our heritage when we engage such current issues as the openness of God. The purposeful preparation to enrich the seminary community committed itself prior to Clark Pinnock's arrival to exemplify the qualities mentioned above. The seminary faculty had open dialogue on open theism, considering it from the perspectives of Scripture, history, theology, and ethics. The week before the lectures, second year M. Div. students attended a panel discussion on the openness of God at which questions were generated for Dr. Pinnock's response. A gathering of Calvinist students also occurred prior to the lectures to consider a Reformed perspective on the issue.

In truth the invitation to Clark Pinnock reflects our commitment to our values: Scripture, academic excellence, community, and spiritual formation. Scripture calls us to assess any and every idea against the standard of God's Word. Academic excellence commits us to an honest and thorough investigation of the "whole counsel of God," even if that means dealing with controversial issues. Community is the context in which the discernment of God's truth through Word and Spirit takes place. Spiritual formation sees in every activity of life the opportunity for the Spirit of truth to continue the work of forming us individually and corporately into the fullness of Christ.

Dale R. Stoffer  
Academic Dean



**The Morning and Evening Sacrifice:  
A Sacrifice of Praise through the Psalms**

By Walter Hampel\*

**The Need for Memory**

Every nation must have a collective memory if it is to survive. Memory is the core of its history. Even though no living Americans have personal memory of President George Washington, we still remember him as our first president. Without a national memory, we would soon forget what it means to be American.

Memory serves us individually as well. It roots us to our community, family and even ourselves. It is not uncommon to find family photographs on our desks at work stuffed inside a wallet. We do this not because we cannot remember these loved ones without such photographs. Rather, we do it because the photos serve as a periodic reminder during the day of those who love us and of our life beyond the confines of work.

Christians need memory too. Without it, we begin to forget the One who loves us and died for us. The world has a way of trying to force its attention and its priorities on our daily lives. David Wells likens the world's influence on us to a constant pounding. He writes that such a pounding

is made up of the pressures, demands, and expectations of our modern culture that combine to deliver the message that *we must belong to it*, not simply in the sense that we must live in it, but rather that *we must live by it*.<sup>1</sup> (Emphasis added)

This threat is not a new one. Throughout church history, Christians have found various ways of fulfilling the command to "remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David."<sup>2</sup> Numerous devotional practices have developed as Christians have sought to keep their minds on heavenly things rather than on the things of this world.<sup>3</sup>

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## The Morning and Evening Sacrifice: A Sacrifice of Praise Through the Psalms

Christians throughout the centuries have used various means of remembering God on a frequent basis. In many cultures, roadside "pilgrim crosses" were set up as reminders of Christ and to serve as sites for travelers' prayers. These crosses acted as a "thread of memory" which connected the traveler to Christ.

There are two special "threads of memory" which can keep us connected to Christ. These threads have been used for millennia by those faithful to God. When woven together, these threads provide a time-tested pattern for communing with Christ and keeping Him in our memory.

### The First Thread – A Timely Sacrifice

When God was preparing His people Israel to enter the Promised Land of Canaan, the LORD gave specific commands to Moses concerning the rituals of worship which He wanted of His people. Among the many requirements given to Moses, God commanded a twice-daily sacrifice. He commanded the daily sacrifice of "two lambs, year old. Offer one in the morning and the other at twilight." <sup>4</sup> This set in place the pattern for the morning and evening sacrifice.

Over the next several centuries, the worship of God was centered in the Tent of Meeting described in Exodus 25-27. After King David made Jerusalem the capital of the nation, he desired to build God a permanent house to replace the Tent of Meeting. God told David that his son Solomon was the one to build the Temple. Yet, David was allowed to make plans and provisions for that future House of God. One of the provisions required a change of priestly functions for the Levites. Since the Levites would no longer need to take down and set up the Tent of Meeting, God, through David, gave them a new assignment. The Levites were now

to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD. They were to do the same in the evening.<sup>5</sup>

The morning and evening sacrifice was beginning to take on a devotional character.

As Israel's history progressed, the devotional component of the morning and evening sacrifice grew. Prayer was now being likened to the evening sacrifice. The Psalmist writes in Psalm 141:2:

May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.

The twice-daily sacrifices also had become time-markers for the people of Israel. In Elijah's confrontation with the prophets of Baal, the writer of 1 Kings indicates that Elijah's sacrifice to God occurred at the "time for the evening sacrifice."<sup>6</sup> During the Babylonian Captivity, with the Temple in Jerusalem in ruins and all but a few of the inhabitants either dead or deported, Daniel offers a prayer to God and receives an answer from the angel Gabriel "about the time of the evening sacrifice."<sup>7</sup> Even after the period of exile in Babylon, the writer of the book of Ezra points out that Ezra ends an hours-long period of abasement before the Lord and begins a prayer of confession for the sin of his people "at the time of evening sacrifice."<sup>8</sup>

### **Enter the Church**

The Church further developed the practice of a morning and evening sacrifice. Since Christ's death was the ultimate, once-for-all, and perfect sacrifice, the original morning and evening sacrifice of a lamb would no longer be necessary or even appropriate. Yet, the Scriptures call us to a continual sacrifice. It is not a bloody animal sacrifice or an offering of grain or wine. We are called to a sacrifice of praise. The writer of Hebrews reminds us that

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise — the fruit of lips that confess his name.<sup>9</sup>

Early in Church history, Christians continued the pattern of prayer and praise started by their Old Testament counterparts. Not only did morning and evening prayer continue but additional times of prayer developed as well. Using Psalm 119:164 as its mandate ("Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous laws"), Christians developed fixed-time prayer with up to seven times a day specified as special hours of prayer.

Standardized formats and fixed times for prayer arose early in church history. The Didache, a manual for church practice, dating to the late 1<sup>st</sup> or early 2<sup>nd</sup> century, regarded the Lord's Prayer as a fixed format prayer to be said continually by the Christian faithful. It instructs its readers to pray the Lord's Prayer and to "Say this prayer three times every day."<sup>10</sup> Early church fathers such as Clement of Alexandria

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(c.150-c.215) and Tertullian (c.160-c.225) suggested the use of fixed times of prayer throughout the day.<sup>11</sup>

Hippolytus, writing around AD 217, recommended seven specific times daily prayer. The first is upon waking in the morning. The second at 9 a.m. The third at noon. The fourth at 3 p.m. The fifth at bedtime. The sixth at midnight. The seventh at dawn. He used several biblical texts as patterns for these set times of prayer. He wrote that the reason for a 9 a.m. time of prayer, for example, is that it was "at that hour Christ was nailed to the tree."<sup>12</sup>

John Chrysostom, writing in AD 388, urged believers in Christ to set aside a time of prayer in church at dawn, before going to work. This would be a time to thank God and "make your prayers and confessions to the God of all things."<sup>13</sup> Likewise, he instructs the Christian

that at evening, he should return here to the church, [and] render an account to the Master of his whole day and beg forgiveness for his sins.<sup>14</sup>

Corporate morning and evening prayer was finding expression in places such as Jerusalem. In AD 384, a Spanish traveler named Egeria wrote a detailed account of her pilgrimage to Jerusalem. In this account, she noted that prayer services were daily held at the site of the Lord's resurrection. These services were no small gathering. Starting before dawn, the monks, virgins and some lay persons met for hymns, prayers and psalms until sunrise. There were also services at noon, 3 p.m., and the evening "Lucernare" at the time of the lighting of the lamps at 4 p.m. at which time further prayers, hymns and psalms were offered until dusk.<sup>15</sup>

The monastic movement continued this practice with the development of seven "canonical" (ordered by church rule) hours. These hours roughly correspond to Hippolytus' hours. They are Matins & Lauds (dawn), Prime (6 a.m.) Terce (9 a.m.) Sext (Noon), None (3 p.m.), Vespers (Sunset) and Compline (night). In observance of these hours, the clergy were required to recite the Divine Office, "a complicated set of prayers that changed every day."<sup>16</sup> These prayers consisted of various hymns, passages from Scripture and the Psalms with specific readings found in a book called the Breviary.



During the middle ages, it was not uncommon to have the morning and evening prayers sung in church. In England, these services were open to both the laity and the clergy. F.A. Gasquet wrote

In some of the larger parish churches a considerable portion of the Divine Office, as well as the Mass, was sung daily. A note in the churchwardens' accounts of St. Michael's Cornhill, London, written in 1538, asks prayers for "Richard Atfield, sometime parson of the church ... for that he, with consent of the bishop, ordained and established Mattins [Morning Prayer], High Mass, and Evensong [Evening Prayer] to be sung daily in the year 1375." This had been done regularly for 163 years, and the hours at which the various services were held would appear to have been: Matins at 6 a.m., High Mass at 9, and Evensong on work-days at 2 p.m.<sup>17</sup>

Medieval piety developed, literate laypersons desired to copy the pattern of the prayers and special hours for prayer which the monks followed. Roger Wieck points out

With increasing wealth and education, the late medieval laity began to covet both the clergy's prayers and its books, particularly the breviary... They sought a book like the breviary but easier to use and more pleasing to the eye. The Book of Hours became that book.<sup>18</sup>

Fixed-hour prayer was, once again, becoming a practice of the everyday Christian.

After the Reformation swept through Europe in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the use of fixed-hour prayer continued. Luther's liturgical revisions maintained the canonical hours of Matins (Morning Prayer) and Vespers (evening prayer). The Church of Scotland, in its 1647 *Directory for Family Worship*, instructed

...for secret (personal) worship, it is most necessary...to perform this duty *morning and evening*, and at other occasions.<sup>19</sup> (Emphasis added)

The Book of Common Prayer (BCP) is a collection of ancient Christian prayers, first compiled and customized for use by the Anglican Church in 1552. Among the prayers in the BCP are daily Morning and Evening prayer. Despite numerous

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revisions since 1552, the Morning and Evening prayers have been retained right up to the present.

### The Second Thread – The Psalms

The Psalms have been called the “Hymnbook of Israel”. One hundred fifty number, the Psalms make up the largest individual book in the Bible. They cover the range of human emotion and human interaction with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The Psalms offer praise to God in the midst of the circumstances of life. One finds joy, (Psalm 98), anger (Psalm 109), sorrow (Psalm 137), anguish (Psalm 6.3) and wonder (Psalm 8.3-5). In the midst of these emotions, God is the One worshipped and looked to as the ultimate meaning of human existence (Psalm 62.1-2).

The New Testament is filled with quotes from the Psalms. These quotes are not incidental references. The Lord Jesus used Psalm 110.1 to point to His true identity as descendant of King David, yet possessing more honor than David.<sup>20</sup> The crucified Lord’s anguished cry of despair to God was a direct quote from the first verse of Psalm 22.<sup>21</sup> On the Day of Pentecost, Peter used Psalm 16 to prove that Jesus was truly the Messiah of Israel.<sup>22</sup> The disciples understood Psalm 2 as a prophecy of Herod and Pontius Pilate’s complicity in the death of Jesus.<sup>23</sup> The Psalms which sing God’s praise also provide a wonderful testimony of His son Jesus.

From the start of church history, the Psalms found a place in the hearts and minds of Christians. Early liturgies in the church featured a responsorial use of the Psalms in which verses would be chanted and the worshippers would echo back a single refrain.<sup>24</sup> Even today, many Christian denominations still use responsorial Psalms in the course of corporate worship. A great love for the Psalter was attested to by the 4th century theologian Basil the Great. In his *Homily 10 on Psalm 1*, he wrote:

The Book of psalms has taken over what is profitable from all. It foretells coming events; it recalls history; it frames laws for life; it suggests what must be done...A psalm implies serenity of soul; it is the author of peace, which calms bewildering and seething thoughts...the voice of the Church...Therein is perfect theology...<sup>25</sup>

The early Christian devotion to the Psalms was evidenced in the 1984 discovery of a codex Psalter in Egypt. The completely intact book, written on 17 cm by 11 cm sheets of parchment, was found at an excavation site in a Christian cemetery 85 miles south of Cairo. This Psalter, bound with a wooden cover, was found under the head of the corpse of a 12-year-old Egyptian girl. The text was written in the Coptic dialect of Oxyrhynchos. Both the burial site and the book date back to the late 4<sup>th</sup> century. Such a burial gesture must have reflected the reverence in which the girl's family held the Psalter. Gawdat Gabra, the director of the Coptic Museum in Cairo, Egypt, where that old Egyptian Psalter was put on display in 1992, related that

I can imagine her parents, in their grief when she died, deciding to give her the most precious gift they knew: the *Book of Psalms*....It was the ultimate gift.<sup>26</sup>

The Psalms became the core of the Divine Office. They were chanted (sung) by monks as early as AD 500. As Andrew Hughes writes: "The main purpose of the [Divine] offices is the recitation of the psalms."<sup>27</sup> It was an early ideal for the monks to chant the entire Psalter every day. Yet, in the Rule of Benedict, an early book of regulations and instruction for monks, a concession was made. The 150 Psalms would be chanted during the seven canonical hours over the course of one week rather than in a single day. While the entire Psalter would be recited during the week, the actual psalms used during a given session of the Divine Office were not necessarily sequential (e. Psalm 1, then 2, then 3, etc.)

Like the fixed hour prayers, the structured recitation of the Psalms also found a place with the laity. An example from early church history is that of Macrina (c.327–379). Macrina was the sister of Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa. She was a student of the Psalms and avidly used them throughout her daily activities. In a letter to the monk Olympius, Gregory remembered that

She was especially well versed in the Psalms, going through each part of the Psalter at the proper time; when she got up or did her daily tasks or rested, when she sat down to eat or rose from the table, when she went to bed or rose from it for prayer, she had the Psalter with her at all times, like a good and faithful traveling companion.<sup>28</sup>

## The Morning and Evening Sacrifice: A Sacrifice of Praise Through the Psalms

The Psalms were the heart of Christian worship well into the era of the Reformation. In early colonial America, the congregational singing during Sunday worship services consisted of the singing of the Psalms that had been put into metrical (rhyming musical verse). The importance that this form of worship had with colonial American Christians is seen in the fact that the first book printed in British North America was the 1640 collection of metrical Psalms called *The Bay Psalm Book*. The devotion to praising God with the Psalms continued in the piety of the early New England home. The piety of praising God with Psalms in the context of home worship is found in the example of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758). It was common for Edwards and his family to mark the start of the Sabbath on Saturday evening at sunset. At sunset they offered a prayer, the lighting of a candle and the singing of a psalm.<sup>29</sup> The Psalter was also used as an instructional tool in Puritan New England. Psalters such as the Ainsworth Psalter contained not only the text of the Psalms but explanatory notes as well. Alice Earle points out that such a Psalter was

not only a dictionary but a perfect encyclopedia of useful knowledge. Things spiritual and things temporal were explained therein.<sup>30</sup>

The BCP also makes provision for a structured reading of the Psalms. In conjunction with its Morning and Evening Prayers, the Book of Common Prayer parses out the Psalms in numeric sequence, special church feasts and Sundays excepted. The BCP arranges the Psalms so that a handful of them would be read during Morning Prayer and another handful read during Evening Prayer. Rather than going through the entire Psalter in seven days (i.e. Benedict's Rule), the BCP takes its reader through the 150 Psalms in a month.

### The Two Threads Woven Together

As can be seen from the Bible and Church history, Christians have a rich devotional background in fixed hour prayers such as the Morning and Evening Prayers as well as the rich use of the Psalms as the premier hymnbook of Christian praise to God. These practices have transcended language, culture, time and place. They provide for us a time-tested pattern for keeping Christ in our memory and thoughts. Our spiritual ancestors found it important to set aside at least two times (morning and evening) every day for prayer. They also made use of the Psalms as their primary text for prayer and praise. We would benefit to make their pattern our own by offering these readings to God as a morning and evening sacrifice of praise.



The advice of Hippolytus, given in the 3rd century, applies just as much in the 21st century. Concerning cultivating a discipline of regular daily times of prayer, Hippolytus advises his readers then and advises us now:

if you act so, all you faithful, and remember these things, and teach them in your turn... you will not be able to be tempted or to perish, since you have Christ always in memory.<sup>31</sup>

### Endnotes

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2 Timothy 2:8

Colossians 3:1-2

Exodus 29:28-39

1 Chronicles 23:30

1 Kings 18

Daniel 9:21

Ezra 9:5

Hebrews 13:15

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James F. White, ed. *Documents of Christian Worship* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992) 78.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid 80.

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<sup>15</sup> Egeria, *Pilgrimage of Egeria, XXIV-XXV*, transl. John Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels* (London: Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, 1971) 123-126.

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<sup>20</sup> Luke 20:41-44

<sup>21</sup> Matthew 27:46

<sup>22</sup> Acts 2:25-28

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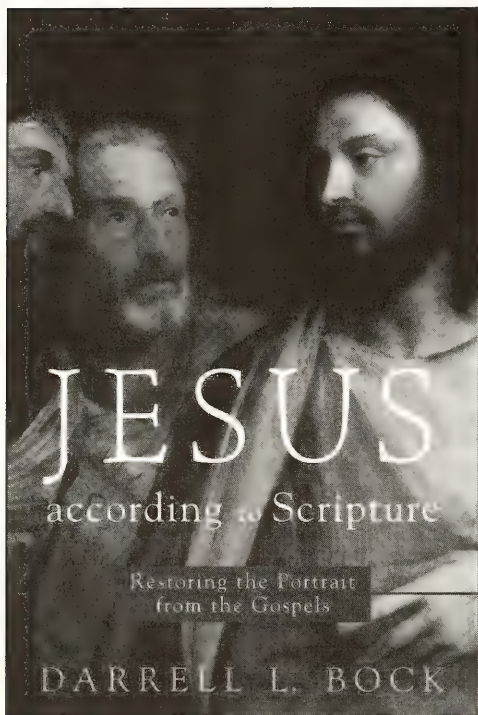
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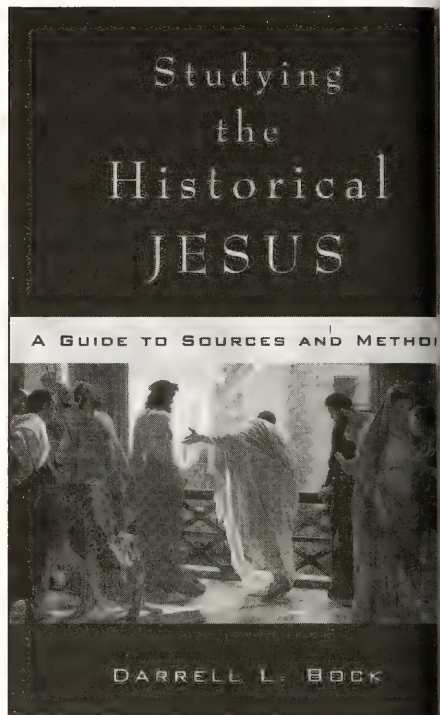
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**The Wind and the Waves  
Biblical Theology in Protology and Eschatology**

David W. Baker\*

Abstract

Wind and water are ambiguous forces in the biblical world, and in the Bible itself. Sometimes threatening and sometimes benign and beneficent, these elements bracket the Bible, from the watery deep overblown by the wind of the Spirit in Genesis through the vanishing sea in Revelation. This paper traces the development and use of the motif, highlighting the Old Testament occurrences, but also integrating later uses, especially Jesus' sovereignty over these elements in Mark 4.

Introduction

Chiasmus, also known as ring construction or concentric parallelism, is a well-recognized literary feature wherein "words, phrases, sentences and even longer texts are sequenced not linearly, but in a cross-pattern"<sup>1</sup> in which the first and last element correspond, as do the second and second from last, and so on. Thus one ends where one began, having gone there and back again. These can run for small word plays such as the first man's purported self-introduction to the first woman ("Madam, I'm Adam", for which I have been unable to trace the biblical reference), to the suggestion that entire biblical books such as Galatians<sup>2</sup> and Jeremiah<sup>3</sup> are framed by this structural device.

Interest in the device has spread even beyond academia. Perhaps it is the delight in discovering at times hidden patterns of linguistic play which gives rise to more popular works such as one recently entitled *Never Let a Fool Kiss You or a Kiss Fool You*.<sup>4</sup> This interest seems to be broader than linguistic, however, since basic human questions revolve around beginnings and endings. Whether innocent and naïve questions ("Where did I come from, Daddy?" "Where did Grandma go when she died, Mommy?")- questions not quickly answered even in their naïveté!), or more reasoned articulations of national origin (e.g. "My father was a wandering Aramaean, and he went

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down into Egypt with a few people and lived there and became a great nation, powerful and numerous." [Deut 26:5, NIV]; or "When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation," which, for the occasion, is the American Declaration of Independence), beginnings and ending fascinate.

A suggestion by a student as to a possible thesis topic led to the concept of this paper. He was interested in studying the background and significance of the astonishing question concerning Jesus: "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him" (Mark 4:41). This led to thoughts of wind and water language used elsewhere in Scripture. In this realm there seems to be a cosmic chiasm, ranging from the Urpunkt of the wind of God's spirit moving over primeval waters in Genesis 1:2 to an Endpunkt of the disappearance of regular terrestrial waters in Revelation 21:1, they being replaced by water from the very throne of God (Rev 22:1). As an intriguing literary, historical, cosmic and theological Mittelpunkt lie Jesus' encounters with wind and water as recorded in the Gospels.

### Previous study

Mine is, of course, by no means the first study to notice thematic links across the canon. Hermann Gunkel wrote an influential study of a purported conflict between God and forces of evil which stretches, he suggests, from Genesis 1 to Revelation 12. He looked at the texts against a background of ancient Near Eastern myth, a different approach than will be followed here. Claus Westermann has also looked at *Anfang und Ende in der Bibel*,<sup>6</sup> and, in a more modest work, Warren Gage looked at some eschatological trajectories which are launched in Genesis and continue to the end of the canon.<sup>7</sup> Even the text of Genesis itself, starting as it does with the beginning (בראשית) leads one naturally to ask about the end (אחרית הימים).<sup>8</sup>

### Scope of this study

Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek terms within the semantic fields of water and wind are numerous in Scripture. An exhaustive study of these is beyond the scope of this paper, or even a monograph, as evidenced for example, by a volume by Philip Reymond concerning only water terms in the Old Testament.<sup>9</sup> Many of the listed terms have a rich range of figurative and metaphorical meaning in Scripture, as do such terms in all languages, since the natural phenomena themselves are so ubiquitous and

necessary for life. These figurative uses will not play a primary role here, however. Rather, attention will be directed toward occurrences of the actual phenomena themselves, most particularly when they occur in the context of the workings of God.

#### the study

##### Old Testament (Summary)

Christina Baxter in her stimulating Tyndale lecture<sup>10</sup> stated that how God acts shows who he is; he is self-consistent and there is no discrepancy between being and doing on his part. What do the actions of God show of his essence in the Old Testament passages which concern wind and water? The Old Testament evidence regarding the contiguous use of wind and water terminology will show the following.

Firstly, God as creator has superintendence or control even over things not specifically listed as being created by him. He is neither faced with a rebellious opponent in his natural creation, nor is he involved in conflict with nature.

Secondly, God uses these aspects of the world, the wind and the rain, as his instruments; they have no autonomous function without him. From the perspective of those who encounter them, their purposes might appear either beneficial or harmful, but God wields them. Even in a text such as Job 26, which appears to be a polemic against pagan religious beliefs by describing a metaphorical battle between God and other deities, water is in God's control, and it is "his" wind.

Thirdly, there is no rival with God for this power over wind and wave. Other claimants to such authority are shown to be without standing.

##### Old Testament Evidence

Starting at the beginning is a wise move, though the amount of ink spilt concerning the meanings of relevant terms and concepts such as רוּחַ, תְּהוֹם, and מַיִם at the beginning of the canon could, I am sure, more than refill the primeval sea [and one could also make comment on much of the writings in comparison to mere wind, but it is probably more prudent not to go there]. It is commonly suggested that Genesis 1:2 reflects a mythological conflict between Israel's God (Elohim/Yahweh) and the chaotic deep (tehom). This purportedly derives, according to Gunkel, from the Babylonian creation myth Enuma elish where the God Marduk (the part played by Yahweh) defeats the sea goddess Tiamat (played by tehom) with the wind as a weapon.<sup>11</sup> This view, with variations and permutations such as a Canaanite rather than a Mesopotamian background for the story,<sup>12</sup> has been espoused by numerous subsequent writers,<sup>13</sup> being restated for the more popular audience in recent dictionaries.<sup>14</sup>

An effective counter to aspects of this interpretation has been articulated by

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David Tsumura,<sup>15</sup> who shows that the proposed etymological connection between Tiamat/tehom<sup>16</sup> is fallacious,<sup>17</sup> and that there is no personalization of 'deep' or 'water' in the Genesis account.<sup>18</sup> Rather, the subterranean sea is the referent of tehom. A conflict is foreign to the Genesis account,<sup>19</sup> with the only movement<sup>20</sup> being that God's agent, the ruah.

It is often suggested that the sea was threatening for Israel, an object of fear. For example, Robert Luyster makes this claim.<sup>21</sup> He also suggests a Babylonian, rather than a Palestinian or Canaanite setting for the concept of the threatening sea.<sup>22</sup> He states that "for desert nomads water is characteristically a blessing, but for the marsh dwellers between the Tigris and Euphrates the feeling was entirely different."<sup>23</sup> It is unclear where he places Israel in this equation since they, living in Palestine, are presumably among the "desert nomads" but they borrow the frightening sea concept from Mesopotamia. This interpretation raises questions on geographical, sociological, psychological and textual grounds.

Geographically, Israel finds itself during most of its existence in a non-Mesopotamian, and therefore non-marshland, environment. It is bounded on the west by the Mediterranean, on the south by the Red Sea, and on the north by the Sea of Galilee. All of these bodies of water are larger than the two rivers defining Mesopotamia, and they would cause greater weather systems than would these rivers, not all of them beneficial. The suggestion that water itself was a threat is true for flooding rivers, Luyster suggests,<sup>24</sup> but it is equally true, and often more devastatingly sudden, in normally dry wadi, or nahal, part of Israel's native geography.

Sociologically, a designation of Israel or its geographical neighbors as "desert nomads" is misleading. Some portions of the region are steppe land (midbar), but Canaan is not desert, and neither Israel nor most of her neighbors should be designated as "nomads" if that is defined as itinerant hunters or herdsmen without permanent settlement. There has been much study of the topic of nomadism in the ancient Near East, especially by Michael Rowton,<sup>25</sup> and this is a point often made by Donald Wiseman.<sup>26</sup> Israel and its neighbors are not well described as nomads.

There is also a psychological difficulty with this interpretation of Luyster. According to them, Babylon fears because they live in watery conditions and know water too well, but Palestine does not fear because they live in desert conditions and do not know water at all. Psychologically, fear seems to be driven in the other direction: fear of the unknown rather than fear of the known. Marsh dwellers make their livelihood from the water. For them it is sustenance and the mediator of life itself. Sailors learn to cope with and overcome the sea's at times violent nature. The Greeks, a maritime people, often referred to the sea as 'the wine red sea,' and this was not because of its



age between it and battle and bloodshed. Those who know the sea describe it as a thing of beauty rather than as a thing of terror. For water dwellers, the water would not be a dangerous threat causing fear, but a powerful force deserving respect. For a desert dweller, however, the unknown,<sup>27</sup> or that which is simply fabulous such as the sea, would be more likely to cause terror. They would not have been able to develop the coping mechanisms, and would not have discerned any benefit from the sea. It would be more of a powerful threat to them.

Finally, such a concept of the threatening sea appears suspect on textual grounds. In the *Enuma elish* account, Tiamat, supposedly goddess of salt water, seeks to destroy the *iggigi* after a failed attempt to do so by her consort, Apsu, lord of the fresh waters.<sup>28</sup> There is a resulting battle between her and Marduk of the storm, and she is defeated and dismembered.<sup>29</sup> From the text itself, this violence does not appear to be a permanent attribute of the waters since no conflict is discernable at the outset of the story. Prior to the creation of the elements of civilized society we read that "Primeval Apsu was their progenitor, and matrix-Tiamat was she who bore them all, they were mingling their waters together."<sup>30</sup> Other deities come into being, and things proceed harmoniously for a period before any conflict arises.<sup>31</sup> This indicates that one cannot infer, based on this account, that the water is fundamentally threatening.

It is noteworthy that within the *Enuma elish* narrative any threat by the sea is directed against the *iggigi*, a sub-category of divine beings. Mankind is unthreatened, and there seems to be no indication that he has anything to worry about after being created, except an inordinate amount of drudgery in service of the gods.<sup>32</sup>

The suggestion of threatening water and sea as a common motif in the Old Testament can also be questioned by analysis of the biblical texts, including Genesis 1, to which we now return.

Whether the term *ruah* refers to the blowing 'wind',<sup>33</sup> a spiritual emanation from God,<sup>34</sup> or even God's breath,<sup>35</sup> the grammar of the passage shows that *ruah*, like the waters, is under God's superintendence. (The suggestion that '*elohim*' is grammatically a superlative adjective,<sup>36</sup> resulting in 'a great wind' is without merit in this chapter where its regular, nominal use as 'God' occurs some 25 times). What is presented here is a picture of the serene control of God at the beginning of the creation, perhaps better, the ordering, process, with no rivals in sight as he prepares the universe for those like him.<sup>37</sup> Any polemic against Mesopotamian or Canaanite cosmogonic beliefs is only implicit as regards this passage itself, though, as Heidel<sup>38</sup> and others have shown, implied they are.

Allusion to the creation event or account is not infrequent in scripture,<sup>39</sup> and

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several of these allusions include mention of wind and water. Job, in his thoughts on origins and mystery of wisdom in chapter 28, credits God with establishing wisdom the fear of the Lord (v. 28) from the very time of creation itself. Wisdom, according to Reymond, corresponds to the "goodness" of creation in Genesis 1.<sup>40</sup> It seems almost to be perceived as one of the laws of nature, founded, like the Mesopotamian me "when he gave to the wind its weight, and apportioned out the waters by measure; when he made decree for the rain, and a way for the thunderbolt" (28:25-26). Wind (ruah) and water (matar and haziz) are here conjoined as parts of the ongoing life of the world. It would be nice to see this passage as an allusion to the cyclical nature of the seasons, which is the function of the luminaries in Genesis 1:16,<sup>41</sup> but this seems to outstrip the evidence of the passage itself.<sup>42</sup>

Wisdom, or knowledge, and creation also meet in Isaiah 40, where Yahweh's power will manifest itself in his loving care for his chastised people. His ability to provide this care is but a trifling matter for the God who easily measures in his hand water and soil, mountain and hill (v. 12).<sup>43</sup> This power is juxtaposed in v. 13 with the independence of Yahweh's ruah, (Who has directed Yahweh's ruah [here usually translated as 'spirit'], or as his counselor has instructed him?). No idol can hope to compare to this One of real power and insight (vv. 18-20). Nor can humanity, which Agur confesses as without wisdom or knowledge in Proverbs 30:2-3. Futile humanity is contrasted by Agur with the One who gathered the wind (ruah), wrapped up the waters (mayim) and established the earth (v. 4).

This divine provider continues to work according to the Psalmist. In Psalm 147:7-20, among other things God feeds animals and birds, waters the earth through rain (v. 8), and makes the waters flow (nzi) by melting snow and ice by means of ruah (vv. 16-18). As well as being granted, providence can also be withheld, as Amos reminded Israel in chapter 4. Among the natural disasters visited upon Israel in order to bring them back to Yahweh were famine (v. 6), blight, mildew and locusts to affect the crops (v. 9), pestilence and war (vv. 10, 11), and the apparently random withholding of rain (geshem; vv. 7-8). Yahweh's ability to bring these disasters associates with him being the former of mountains and the creator of the wind (bore' ruah, v. 13), a claim not directly derived from Genesis 1, since there is no origin of wind, water, or deep explicitly mentioned.

The contrast between the creative and sustaining power of God on the one hand and the ineffectiveness of idols has already been noted in Isaiah 40. This is one of a number of cases where there is an explicit polemic against the religious beliefs of the apostate Israelites and their pagan neighbors. Idols are also the target in two more passages from the prophets, both in Jeremiah. Jeremiah 51:15-16 reintroduce several

gs already met in our discussion, including the wind and creation:<sup>44</sup> "(15) It is he who made the earth by his power, who established the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding stretched out the heavens. (16) When he utters his voice there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and he makes the mist rise from the ends of the earth. He sends lightnings for the rain, and he brings out the wind from his storehouses." This particular articulation of Yahweh as creator of water and wind was apparently well known, since it reappears practically verbatim in Psalm 135:6-7.<sup>45</sup> God in his wisdom and power is in stark contrast to the people who worship idols, which themselves have no real substance (they are hevel, 'vapor' v. 18), no truth but rather falsehood (v. 18), and no life force (no ruah v. 17). This picture, with its *Sturm und Drang* (v. 16) seems to provide a contrast to the apparent tranquility of Genesis 1.

Jeremiah had previously used the exact same description of God's creative acts in Jer 10:12-13.<sup>46</sup> Here foolish idolatry is characterized as one of the 'ways of the nations' (v. 2) or 'customs of the peoples' (v. 3), while Jeremiah 51 is a more specific warning against the practices of Babylon, whose end at the hand of the Medes is already in process (v. 11). The polemic against useless idols is more pointed in Jer 10:11, where they are specifically contrasted to the God of the wind and the water. They are "the gods who do not make the heavens and the earth."<sup>47</sup>

The last creation (or possibly better, 'organization'<sup>48</sup>) passage to which we will return is Job 26, which is not an apologetic for Yahweh against unnamed gods, but rather a warning about idolatrous figures and deities some of whom are specifically identified. They include Canaanite deities and elements of the afterlife. While time will not permit here an analysis on all of them, they can be noted in the translation of Job 26:5-13.

(5) The shades (refaim, Ugaritic rapi'um<sup>49</sup>) below tremble, the waters and their inhabitants. (6) Sheol<sup>50</sup> is naked before God, and Abaddon<sup>51</sup> has no covering. (7) He stretches out Zaphon [the sacred mountain of Baal<sup>52</sup>] over the void (tohu, cf. Gen 1:2), and hangs the earth upon nothing. (8) He binds up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not torn open by them. (9) He covers the face of the full moon, and spreads over it his cloud. (10) He has described [better 'inscribed', hqq] a circle on the face of the waters, at the boundary between light and darkness (cf. Gen 1:2) (11) The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astounded at his rebuke. (12) By his power he stilled the sea (Yam); by his understanding he struck down Rahab<sup>53</sup>. (13) By his wind (ruho) the heavens are made fair; his hand has pierced the fleeing serpent (nahash bariah<sup>54</sup>).



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Here the enemy is plainly identified as being opponents to God. They are so since people are led astray to follow after these already defeated nothings rather than pursuing the God who has acted in the past and continually acts in reality in the quotidian experience of day and night, wind and water. Israel in its stupidity follows flickering shades rather than the one to whom these mighty creative acts are of life in consequence, only the "outskirts of his ways" (v. 14) rather than what identifies him. The ephemeral beings fade in the presence of the God who is from the beginning.

### B. Noah (Genesis 6-9)

Wind and water recur in the text describing recreation, in the story of the flood. This discussion will be briefer since this event did not seem to stir the imaginations and dreams of the ancients, as did the creation event. While water does, of course play a significant role in a flood event,<sup>55</sup> it is collocated with wind in only one verse.<sup>56</sup> Upon remembering Noah and his cargo, God sent a wind which dried up the water (8:1), with the procedure used being stopping the rain and terrestrial water as given in the next verse. Unlike the gods in the Gilgamesh epic who were terrified by the forces of nature which they unleashed ("The gods became frightened of the deluge. They shrank back and went to Anu's highest heaven. The gods cowered like dogs, crouching outside"), God is in complete control. He shows his justice by bringing the floodwaters in the flood plain, and his compassion by removing them.

It is interesting to note here an example of relativity, or change of perspective. I believe it was C. S. Lewis who said that a hell for humanity could be heaven for mosquitoes.<sup>58</sup> So the removal of water can have different consequences in different circumstances. In Amos 4, which we have previously noted, the desiccation is a punishment, and leads to loss of fruition, while in this case of a flood, desiccation allows fruition (Gen 8:17- "Bring out with you every living thing...so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth."; 9:20- "Noah...was the first to plant a vineyard.")<sup>59</sup>

A similar sequence of events befalls Jonah. Fleeing from the command of the Lord, he embarks on a ship to the west. Yahweh, rather than being eluded, sends a great wind, also identified as a great storm over the sea (1:4). This threatens to swamp the ship and drown Jonah and his traveling companions. The sailors, showing more theological perspicuity than the follower of Yahweh, seek to address the situation, but to no avail until they jettison Jonah (vv. 5-15a). At that instant the tumult tempered, and the resulting calm caused the sailors to fear Yahweh since they recognized his power.

This variation of theme of God producing a violent sea is also found in Psalm 107, which appears to relate to the Jonah story. It provides a vivid, poetic picture from



perspective of one actually caught in a storm: (23) "Some went down to the sea in boats, doing business on the mighty waters; (24) they saw the deeds of the Lord, his wondrous works in the deep; (25) for He commanded and raised the stormy wind which lifted up the waves of the sea. (26) They mounted up to heaven, they went down to the depths.... (28) Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble... (29) He made the storm be still and the waves of the sea were hushed," presumably by the cessation of the wind which God had sent.<sup>60</sup>

Reymond understands the "mighty waters" of Psalm 107:23 to contain a season of violence within them,<sup>61</sup> though again this seems to outstrip the evidence. The water at the start seems neutral, a place of commerce which is subsequently troubled by wind. It appears more accurate to say that violence is possible rather than latent, waiting to burst forth. But so is tranquility possible. Neither are a necessary semantic component of the water itself.

In both Genesis 6-9, on the one hand, and Jonah 1 and Psalm 107 on the other, God brings a storm and then relief, in the first case upon the entire world and in the second, upon an individual, with additional, collateral damage as well. There are important differences between the accounts, however. In Genesis, the wind is the means of salvation, drying up the threatening water, while in Jonah and the psalm it is the conveyer of the peril, and is not mentioned at all at the removal of the peril. In both cases, God ('elohim in Genesis, Yahweh in both Jonah and Psalm 107) wields these material forces as a tool, for weal or woe.

#### Red Sea<sup>62</sup> (Exodus 14)

Leaving the relative verdure of Egypt, Israel faced yet another case of the scarcity of water at the Red Sea and the Sinai wilderness. In the course of traversing the latter, lack of water caused grumbling and mounting insurrection. This was in spite of God repeatedly exhibiting his gracious love for his ungrateful people by supplying their need for drinking water (Exod 15:22-25; 17:1-7; Num 20:2-13; 21:4-9, though the claim of a lack of water could well be specious here in this story of the bronze serpent, since no such need is said to have been met by God within this passage; Deut 8:15). At the Red Sea, however, too much water in the shape of the sea itself caused the problem. Here Yahweh showed his grace by dividing the sea water sending a "strong east wind" (Exod 14:21). This is the source of detrimental dryness in other contexts,<sup>63</sup> but here prepares a way of escape.<sup>64</sup>

This passage has also been construed as a polemic against pagan deities.<sup>65</sup> There is no explicit evidence of polemic in the narrative text itself, since the sea is no more personified as a pagan deity than is the wilderness itself, which is said to have

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“closed in upon them” (Exod 14:3). The sea is the same sort of impersonal obstacle as the desert, one that needs to be crossed in order to reach the rest of the Promised Land. The sea does not actively oppose; it passively blocks.

The story is retold in poetic form in Exodus 15, or some would suggest that poetry was the original, earliest rendition of this event, and possibly the earliest written portion of the Old Testament.<sup>66</sup> Whatever is the actual order of the composition of the two texts is not germane to the point being made here, since there seems to be no evidence of a personified sea here in the poetry either. The wind is presented as the instrument of God (15:8-“At the blast (ruah) of your nostrils the waters piled up, floods stood up in a heap; the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.”; 15:10b-“[The wind] blew with your wind,] the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the mighty water”). The sea does not oppose God, but rather serves him as an instrument in order to destroy the real enemy of the narrative, the Egyptian army.<sup>67</sup>

This power to conquer human armies thwarting God’s plans is the core of what is remembered when the story is repeated by Rahab, the prostitute from Jericho (Joshua 2:10). She credits the terror felt by her people upon this episode of drying up the Red Sea. Here, unlike Job 26:12, it is not a Canaanite god Yam which is defeated, but the specifically named geographical feature Yam Suph whose physical waters are dried up. While there is no mention in her recollection of the use of a wind, she does credit the event with robbing her countrymen of their *ruah*, their ‘courage’, their very heart, which melted at the news of God’s power over the elements just as the ice and snow had done before God’s ruah in Ps 147:18. It appears that a victory by God over natural elements in the visible, earthly realm is sufficient to terrify the inhabitants of Jericho without needing to postulate any mythical battle between various deities.

### D. Elijah and Ahab (1 Kings 17-18)

The main task in the ministry of Elijah was to withstand the encroachment of Baalism into Israel. Here we find active confrontation with the claims of Baal/Hadad, the god of the storm: thunder, and lightning, and downpour. Through the rain, which he claimed to provide, came the fertility of field, vine and orchard. Rather than making a propositional announcement regarding the powerlessness of Baal in this area of meteorological phenomena, Elijah provides existential demonstrations of the power of Yahweh. His statement that Yahweh would withhold for three years the water that was needed to sustain agriculture and supply the needs of the people (1 Kings 17:1) would have appeared audacious indeed. Ahab must have thought that this was indeed a World Cup match much to his liking. His team was odds-on favorite, since Baal’s game was water provision, and Yahweh is not primarily a water or storm God, according to

ceptions.

As the game progressed, however, Yahweh was shown to have some skill in the area of precipitation, even to the detriment of his own prophet. Elijah himself had to seek refuge in the town of Zarephath, the area from which Jezebel, Ahab's Baal-adorning wife, originally hailed (1 Kings 16:11). When it came to the finals match at Mount Carmel, the situation seemed even more lop-sided in favor of Baal, who not only had the larger team (450 Baal prophets), but also had a much larger band of supporters (400 Asherah prophets; 1 Kings 18:19) and the home field advantage.<sup>68</sup> Even the match itself was being played by Baal rules; goals scored by fire, probably in the form of lightning burning up the ball (I mean, the bull), itself an animal symbol of Baal.<sup>69</sup>

When Elijah's turn came, the Baal prophets having been held scoreless, he made it quite clear that the Baal rules were being followed, so he had the bull sacrifice drenched with water, which was claimed to be under the authority of Baal. Then, in response to a quiet prayer, Yahweh, the 'Unstorm God,' showed his control over lightning and his superiority over bull, water, and Baal prophet. Finally, at the very end of the match, shows his superiority over Baal himself since he, Yahweh, causes it to rain: 18:44—"Look, a little cloud no bigger than a person's hand is rising out of the sea."; 18:45—"In a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind; there was a heavy rain."

Whether he knew the actual proverb itself, Ahab was basing his belief on the content of Proverbs 25:23: "The north wind produces rain,"<sup>70</sup> and since his god, Baal, is associated with the north, he would have been confident. He probably would have done well to keep in mind an earlier proverb now found in the same chapter (25:14): "Like clouds and wind without rain is one who boasts of a gift never given." His belief in a false god who promised rain and could not deliver would have catastrophic effect on the nation.<sup>71</sup>

Elijah and Jehoshaphat/Jehoram (2 Kings 3)

The final Old Testament episode to which we will look involves the next generation to the episode just studied. Jehoram, son of Ahab and Jezebel, was thwarted in his military campaign against Mesha, king of Moab, due to a lack of water (2 Ki 3:9). His co-campaigner Jehoshaphat, apparently remembering the events of a few years previously,<sup>72</sup> wisely calls for advice from a prophet of Yahweh since he had seen Yahweh's provision of water already in his lifetime under Ahab.

When Elisha arrived at the kings' headquarters, he "said to the king of Israel (Jehoram), 'What have I to do with you? Go to your father's prophets or to your mother's'" (3:13a) He is forcing Jehoram to make a personal choice of allegiance:

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“Chose this day whom you will serve, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Josh 24:15). “Your house hasn’t done so up to this point. Will you do so now?” Jehoram responds to this choice with blame rather than fealty: “No; it is the Lord who has summoned us, three kings, only to be handed over to Moab,” (v. 13b); i.e. “God has us into this; he needs to get us out.”

In spite of Jehoram’s attitude and ancestry, and only in consideration of Jehoshaphat, Yahweh through Elisha promises to provide, but in a way more powerful and unexpected than even in the context with Baal and the ordinary, proverbial understanding of the relationship between wind and rain. In this instance “you shall have neither wind nor rain, but the wadi shall be filled with water” (v. 17), and this happens (v. 20). This is not being done to be a miraculous appearance of water, though the text could be so read. It could just indicate a natural rainstorm which was happening further upstream.<sup>73</sup> They don’t see either wind, which generally precedes rain, or the rain itself.

This could also be a means of making Israel and her kings realize the primary cause of the graces granted to them. It seems to be driving them back from secondary to primary causes, something grasped later by Jeremiah, who wrote: “Can any idols of the nations bring rain? Or can the heavens give showers? Is it not you, O Lord our God? We set our hope on you, for it is you who can do this (14:22).” Reymond takes this as a personalization of the clouds, who themselves then are able to decide to give rain or withhold it.<sup>74</sup> Jeremiah’s argument, however, seems to be in the opposite direction. He is denying personality to both idol and cloud, both of which are inanimate and powerless on their own. Clouds cannot give rain except at the impetus of a higher personal power, namely the God of Israel.

## II. New Testament

In only two separate incidents in the life of Jesus, wind and wave come into textual contact. Using the Old Testament background presented above, how would participants and recorders of them have understood this?

### A. Stilling the storm (Matt 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25)

After a strenuous day of preaching and performing wonders, Jesus enters the boat with his disciples. He is exhausted and falls asleep, even though a violent storm comes on the sea,<sup>76</sup> causing waves (kumaton) to threaten to swamp the boat. Jesus rebukes the wind (anemos) and the sea (Matthew and Mark, with Luke reading kluton waves), resulting in a calm. His amazed disciples ask concerning who he really is, since his power is such that even wind and sea (anemos and thalassa, Matthew and Mark) and wind and water (udatos, Luke) obey his rebuke.



Some have read this passage as a continuation of Jesus' previous work of exorcizing demons, personifying the water and wind here. This is suggested since the verb 'rebuke' (epetimesen) used here is directed toward demons elsewhere (e.g., Mark 5: 3:12; 9:15; in 8:33 directed toward Peter who is speaking Satan's words).<sup>77</sup> Gundry has convincingly argued that this is not the case,<sup>78</sup> and there is no demonic involvement explicitly mentioned in the texts.

Numerous scholars look to the Old Testament for the background for the narrative presentation of the event. A number favor this being a reflection of Exodus 14 where God used the wind on the Red Sea (see above, p. 21-22).<sup>79</sup> There are numerous convergences between the episodes, however, which lead to questioning this suggestion. Gundry has pointed out, the enemy in Exodus is the Egyptian army, while here it is the sea, and in Exodus the wind is a tool for salvation, while here it a cause of danger.<sup>80</sup> One could also say that in the Gospels the salvation is from the water while in Exodus the salvation is by the waters, which are never pictured as threatening in Exodus, unless you are an Egyptian.

Pesch suggested a connection with the Jonah story where also a storm threatens the life of a sleeping man.<sup>81</sup> Gundry questions this interpretation as well in several pounds: the sleepers sleep in different places (hold- Jonah; stern- Jesus), different vocabulary (pneuma and kludon in Jonah LXX; lailaps and siesmos in the Gospels, though Luke does use kludon in the passage), and historical peculiarities.<sup>82</sup>

This suggestion might well deserve reexamination, however. The other major candidate for literary influence would appear to be the Noah episode in Genesis 8:1, but the wind a saving force there compared to it as a threatening one here seems to be a major hurdle. In both Jonah and the Gospels wind and water enclose the event, occurring at beginning and end, while the wind only ushers in the end in Genesis. The resultant emotion of the occupants of the boat is the same in Jonah and the Gospels: fear (Genesis - yr'; LXX and Gospels- phobos). In any case, the resultant wonder at the mighty acts of God as being one who controls everything, even the elements, is a singular result of these most irregular acts throughout both Testaments.<sup>83</sup> The noteworthy thing for the disciples in our case is that the one who is doing these acts of God is Jesus.

Jesus Walking on the Sea (Matt 14:22-33; Mark 6:47-52; John 6:16-21)

In another instance the disciples were out on the sea, only this time Jesus was not along. The waves picked up (kumaton, Matt 14:24; thalassa diegeireto, John 6:18) with a strong wind. When Jesus walked out toward the boat on the sea, the disciples took heart. Matthew has Peter joining Jesus walking on the water (hudatos; 14:29) but, frightened by the wind, he starts to sink until Jesus catches him. Matthew and Mark

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conclude with the wind ceasing when Jesus (and Peter) reaches the boat (Matt 14:28-30; Mark 6:51), and all aboard are amazed (Mark 6:51) and start worshipping Jesus as God's son (Matt 14:33). John records nothing of Peter, the calming, or the worship.

This situation is presented in a slightly different way than any we have encountered previously. Here there is no explicit mention of divine power in either bringing the wind and water or in controlling them. Jesus simply walks on the water as if it were a path through a park. The incident with Peter seems to be showing Jesus' power in being able to act in a saving way through or during the course of the storm, rather against or to quell it. Divine control is implicit in the event, even if not explicit in the text, and is recognized as such by the disciples. Their amazement (not the fear of the previous episode discussed) and worship which follow are again usually associated with a divine act. This divine identification would have been augmented by Jesus' statement of identity as the "I am" (ego eimi) in Matthew 14:27.<sup>84</sup>

No Old Testament passage provides a clear referent for this episode. There is the similarity of the Red Sea becoming a pathway, but the dissimilarities outweigh the similarities. Using the natural elements to go from one place to another has some parallel with God riding on the clouds (Psalm 104:3; cf. 68:4),<sup>85</sup> but that is the topic of another occasion.

The fury of wind and sea provide the narrative backdrop against which the actions themselves are played out. In developing the narrative, they seem to fulfill the same role as the wind and sea in Genesis 1. In that passage also there is no discussion of origin; the wind and waters are stage setting props upon which the story plays itself out. In both cases God is able to work out his will, bringing order and stability without removing either element, as least as far as it is recorded in the texts themselves. In some way Jesus is also acting as creator, if not of peace, which is not explicit in the Genesis account, at least of order.

### C. The Age to Come (Revelation 21-22)

The closing of the chiasm is much more blurred. The wind (anemos) in Revelation is constrained by the 4 angels in chapter 7, and does not reappear, being replaced by the personified pneuma. Any collocation of wind and sea (thalassa) is no longer possible after Revelation 21:1, when the sea also is no more. Beale suggests that the sea in this passage means not only the physical body of water, but also includes some of its figurative usages.<sup>86</sup> The connotations which he draws on to justify the elimination of the physical water are all negative, however.<sup>87</sup> While these do exist, they should not be seen to indicate that the sea is intrinsically evil or in opposition to God, since we have shown here many counter examples.

While wind and water do not occur together in Revelation, hints of them can be seen in Revelation 22:1. There the "river of the water of life", an allusion to Ezekiel and Zechariah 14:8,<sup>88</sup> issues from God's throne. Since the original physical world has been completely destroyed, as this section of Revelation is understood by some,<sup>89</sup> this reflects a completely new one, water plays an important role in the new as it did in the old. Now God is stated in this new beginning to be the source of the water which in the first beginning was without stated source. The water at the beginning, which was organized and named in the process of bringing forth life, now becomes itself that source. Water was there at the start, and water will be there at the end, and over all is God, creator, provider, sustainer, and Lord.

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Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation* (London/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) 295.

John H. Walton, *Galatians* (London: St Paul Publications, 1969). Other studies of New Testament chiasmus include John W. Welch, ed., *Chiasmus in Antiquity : Structures, Analyses, Exegesis* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1981); Nils Wilhelm Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament : A Study in the Form and Function of Chiastic Structures* (Hampden, MA : Hendrickson, 1992); John Breck, *The Shape of Biblical Language : Chiasmus in the Scriptures and Beyond* (Crestwood, N.Y. : St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1994); Ian H. Thomson, *Chiasmus in the Pauline Letters* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).

Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric*, SBLDS 18 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975).

Harold Grothe, *Never Let a Fool Kiss You or a Kiss Fool You: Chiasmus and a World of Quotations that Say What They Mean and Mean What They Say* (New York: Viking, 1999).

Hermann Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit : eine religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung über Gen 1 und Ap Joh 12* (Göttingen : Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1895).

Klaus Westermann, *Anfang und Ende in der Bibel* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1969).

<sup>7</sup>Warren Austin Gage, *The Gospel in Genesis: Studies in Protology and Eschatology* (Winona Lake, IN: Carpenter Books [a division of Eisenbrauns], 1984).

<sup>8</sup>See Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, transl. John A. Baker (London/Philadelphia: SCM/Westminster, 1967) II, 109-112; Gage, *Gospel in Genesis*.

<sup>9</sup>Philippe Reymond, *L'eau, sa vie, et sa signification dans l'Ancien Testament* (VTS 6; Leiden: Brill, 1958).

<sup>10</sup>Christina Baxter, "The Incarnation: Its Significance for History and Humanity" delivered 3 July, 2000 at the triennial joint meeting of the Tyndale Fellowship.

<sup>11</sup>*Schöpfung und Chaos*; Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, transl. John H. Marks (OTL; London/Philadelphia: SCM/Westminster) 50.

<sup>12</sup>John Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications, 35; Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

<sup>13</sup>David Toshio Tsumura, *The Earth and the Waters in Genesis 1 and 2: A Linguistic Investigation* (JSOTSup 83; Sheffield: JSOT, 1989) 45, n. 2; *idem*, "Genesis and Ancient Near Eastern Stories of Creation and Flood: An Introduction," *"I Studied Inscriptions before the Flood": Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1-11* (SBTS 4; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994) 30-32; Benedikt Otzen *et al.*, *Myths in the Old Testament*, transl. Frederick Cryer (London: SCM, 1980) 33-34.

<sup>14</sup>"Traces of this ancient cosmogony are still evident in the priestly account of creation in Genesis 1. Here the wind of God was instrumental in creation, a detail that is reminiscent of Marduk's final blow on Tiamat: a raging wind sent into her mouth (ANET 67). According to the biblical writer, a firmament divided "the waters from the waters" (Gen 1:6). Hence the concept in the Bible of the two deeps calling to one another (Ps 42:8—Eng 42:7)." C. L. Seow, "The Deep," *ABD* II 125. See also B.



ter, "Tiamat תְּהוֹמִים," Karel van der Toorn *et al.*, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Leiden/Grand Rapids: Brill: Eerdmans, 1999) 867-869 [henceforth *DD*].

*The Earth and the Waters*, 46. See also Alexander Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis: The Story of the Creation* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1951) 98-101.

Ludwig Koehler *et al.*, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1990) 1557-1559; Eduard Dhorme, *A Commentary on the Book of Job*, transl. Harold Knight (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1967) 30

See also Nahum Sarna, *Understanding Genesis* (New York: Schocken, 1966), 22; Heidel, *Babylonian Genesis* 99.

See also John Skinner, *Genesis*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1930) 17; Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11 : A Commentary* (Minneapolis : Augsburg, 1984) 105.

C. Kloos, *Yahweh's Combat with the Sea: A Canaanite Tradition in the Religion of Ancient Israel* (Amsterdam: G. A. van Oorschot/ Leiden: Brill, 1986) suggests evidence of the Canaanite battle motif in such Old Testament texts as Psalm 29 and Exodus 15.

See e.g. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 107 and Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (WBC 1; Waco: Word Books, 1987) 17 for discussions regarding the meaning of the verb used here.

Robert Luyster, "Wind and Water: Cosmogonic Symbolism in the Old Testament," *W 93* (1981) 1; cf. Reymond, *L'eau*, 182.

Luyster, "Wind and Water" 1.

*Ibid.* 9.

*Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup>Michael Rowton, "Urban Autonomy in a Nomadic Environment," *JNES* 32 (1973) 201-215; *idem*, "Autonomy and Nomadism in Western Asia," *Orientalia* 42 (1973) 247-258; *idem*, "The Role of Ethnic Invasion and the Chiefdom Regime in Dimorphic Interaction : The Post Kassite period (ca 1150-750 BC)" *Language, Literature, and History: Philological and Historical Studies Presented to Erica Reiner*, ed. Francesca Rochberg-Halton (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1987) 367-378. See also John Tracy Luke, *Pastoralism and Politics in the Mari Period : A Re-examination of the Character and Political Significance of the Major West Semitic Tribal Groups on the Middle Euphrates, ca. 1828-1758 B.C.* (PhD thesis, University of Michigan; Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1966); Pierre Briant, *Etat et pasteurs au Moyen-Orient ancien* (Cambridge/Paris: Cambridge University Press/Maison des sciences de l'homme 1982); Ofer Bar-Yosef and Anatoly Khazanov, ed., *Pastoralism in the Levant: Archaeological Materials in Anthropological Perspectives* (Madison: Prehistory Press 1992); Benjamin Adam Saidel, "New Insights into Ancient and Modern Pastoral Nomads," *BSR* 23 (1997) 349-353.

<sup>26</sup>E.g. "Abraham Reassessed" in *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives*, ed. A.R. Milla and D. J. Wiseman (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1980/ Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1983) 141-145

<sup>27</sup>Reymond, *L'eau* 164.

<sup>28</sup>Alster, *DDD* 868. The *iggigi* are Mesopotamian wararior gods; see Wolfram von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch I* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1965) 366-26 and B. Kienast, "Igiū, Anunnakkū und," *RLA* 5, 40-44.

<sup>29</sup>"Epic of Creation" IV:93-V:62 in *The Context of Scripture I: Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*, ed. William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger Jr. (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 398-399.

<sup>30</sup>I:2-5 in *ibid.*, 391.

<sup>31</sup>Alster (*DDD* 868) says: "Alongside with the violence principle of killing, sexual productivity appears in the poem as a means of creation."

"Epic of Creation" VI: 5-8 in Hallo and Younger, *Context* I 400.

Targum Onkelos, New Jewish Version, New American Bible, NEB, NRSV.

KJV, NASB, NIV.

Nic. H. Ribberbos, "Gen 11 und 2," *OTS* 12 (1958) 243; O. Steck, *Der Schöpfungsbbericht der Priesterschrift: Studien zur literarkritischen und Überlieferungsgeschichtlichen Problematik von Gen 1,1-2,4a* (FRLANT 115; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975) 235-236. Concerning the history of exegesis, see K. Smoronski, "Et spiritu Dei ferebatur supra atmos," *Bib* 6 (1925) 140-146, 275-293, 361-395.

E.g. Targum Onkelos; Ibn Ezra; J. M. P. Smith, "The Syntax and Meaning of Genesis 1-3," *AJSL* 44 (1927-1928) 111-114; *idem*, "The Use of the Divine Name as Superlatives," *AJSL* 45 (1928-1929) 212-213; *ZAW* 47 (1929) 310; S. Moscati, "The Wind in Biblical and Phoenician Cosmology," *JBL* 66 (1947) 306; D. W. Thomas, "A Consideration of Some Unusual Ways of Expressing the Superlative in Hebrew," *VT* 3 (1953) 214-224; von Rad, *Genesis* 49; Harry Orlinski, "Plain Meaning of Ruah in Gen 2," *JQR* 48 (1957) 174-182.

God's control of the sea as part of creation is stated in Job 38:8-11 where he sets its boundaries. In Babylonian literature, control of "the bolt, the bar of the sea," in which the water is withheld to cause drought, is in the hands of Ea (W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard, *Atra-hasīs: The Babylonian Story of the Flood* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1969] 110-111 r. v: 1-2; 116-117 r. i: 6-7, 10-11; 118-119 r. ii: 4-5, 11-12; 120-121 r. 11: 34-35; see the philological discussion on p. 166.

Heidel, *Babylonian Genesis*.

Gen 3:20; Neh 9:6; Job 26:13; 27:3; 38:4ff.; Ps 33:6, 9; 90:2; 100:3; 102:25; 104; 9:15; Eccl 12:1; Isa 40:26, 28; 42:5; 45:18; Jer 10:12-16; Am 4:13; John 1:1ff.; Acts 24; 14:15; 17:24; Rom 1:20, 25; 11:36; 1 Cor 11:7-9; Col 1:16; 1 Tim. 2:12-14 Heb. 2; 11:3; Rev. 4:11; 10:6.

<sup>40</sup>Reymond, *L'eau* 45.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Reymond's association of matar with specifically winter rain (19) and ruah as 'wintery blasts' (45) seems to be adding unsubstantiated temporal specificity.

<sup>43</sup>In Psalm 33:6-7, Yahweh gathers the sea's waters (me hayam) and the deeps (tehomot), which he has created by means of his ruah, into a storage bottle, and, according to Psalm 135:6-7, he removes the wind from storage ('tsr, the same word as in Ps 33:7) and provides water from the thunderstorm.

<sup>44</sup>Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms III: 101-150* (AB 17a; Garden City: Doubleday, 1970) 26 referring to UT 67:5- clouds, wind, mdl, rain.

<sup>45</sup>There is only one grammatical difference between the two passages. Psalm 135:7 has the first and last verbs as participles (i.e., "makes the clouds rise...brings out the wind" while Jeremiah 5:16 uses vayyiqtol forms (i.e. "he raised clouds...he brought out wind"). Most English translations do not reflect any difference between the two grammatical forms.

<sup>46</sup>The only difference between the two Jeremiah passages is the reading vaya'aleh in 10:13 and the shorter vaya'al in 51:16.

<sup>47</sup>The verse is alone in Jeremiah in being in Aramaic. Various reasons have been proposed for this anomaly. The Targum and Rashi suggest that the people who would be exiled in 587 BC from Jerusalem are getting an anticipatory glimpse of their exilic language, while Jack R. Lundbom suggests that the verse contains a pun which would have been lost if rendered into Hebrew (*Jeremiah 1-20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 21A; New York: Doubleday, 1999) 593. The context mentions several times the stupidity of idols and their worshipers (10:8, 14, 16). This could possibly be yet another indication of the stupidity of idols, who are not even able to comprehend Hebrew, but must use Aramaic, the current *lingua franca*.

<sup>48</sup>Reymond, *L'eau* 175.



ALOT 3, 1275; John E. Hartley, *The Book of Job* (NICOT: Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988) 365, n. 12; J. de Moor, "Rapi'uma – repahaim, ZAW 88 (1976) 323-35; C. L'heureux, "The Ugaritic and Biblical Rephaim," *HTR* 67 (1974) 265-274; Arvin Pope, *Job* (AB 15; Garden City: Doubleday, 1965) 183- also in Phoenician literary inscriptions; Mark. S. Smith, "Rephaim," *ABD* 5, 674-676.

"Dead, Place of," *ABD* 2, 101-105; it is at times personified.

Hartley, *Job* 365, n. 11; related to death in Job 38:12, the grave in Psalm 88:11. In Revelation 9:11 as Apollyon, the angel of the bottomless pit; Herbert G. Gerther, "Apollyon," *ABD* 1, 301-302- personified here and in Proverbs 27:20.

Hartley, *Job* 365; J. Roberts, "Sapon in Job 26:7," *Bib* 56 (1975) 554-557; Reymond, *L'eau* 15, 175-176.

J. Day, "Rahab," *ABD* 5, 610-611.

Used elsewhere of Leviathan (Isa 27:1; KTU 1.5.1.1). Possibly the two creatures are the same (*ibid.*). For a discussion of Rahab and serpent, see Reymond, *L'eau* 189-193; Uehlinger, "Leviathan לויתן," *DDD* 511-515; K. Spronk, "Rahab ררהב," *DDD* 684-686.

As mabbul (indicated here as A) and mavyim (here B)- Genesis 6:17 (AB); 7:6 (A mayah B), 10 (BA), 17 (A...B), 18 (BB), 19 (B), 20 (B), 24 (B); 8:1 (B), 3 (BB), 5 (B), 6 (B), 8 (B), 9 (B), 11 (B), 13 (B); ma'ayanot tehom- 7:11; 8:2; geshem- 7:12; 8:2. For study of mabbul, see Kloos, *Yahweh's Conflict*, 62-69, who sees it as designating the heavenly ocean" (cf. J. Begrich, "Mabbül. Eine exegetisch-lexikalische Studie," *Zeitschrift für Semitistik und verwandte Gebiete* 6 (1928) 135-153) which carries no hostile connotation (66), at least in Psalm 29.

In Gen 6:17 God warns that he is about to deliver a 'flood of water' on all that has within it the ruah, usually read as 'breath' of life.

Benjamin R. Foster, "Gilgamesh," Hallo, *Context of Scripture* I, 459.

<sup>58</sup> Source undetermined.

<sup>59</sup> The writer of 4 Maccabees, in exhorting his hearers based on the flood event, turns the function of the wind around from what it is in Gen 8:1. He uses it as a scourge rather than as the instrument of salvation. He writes: "Just as Noah's ark, carrying the world through the universal flood, stoutly endured the waves, so you, O guardian of the law, overwhelmed from every side by the flood of your emotions and the violent winds, the torture of your sons, endured nobly and withstood the wintry storms that assail religion" (4 Maccabees 15:31-32).

<sup>60</sup> The psalm continues with further claims of God's power over water, which he is able both to withhold ("He turns rivers into a desert, springs of water into a thirsty ground, fruitful land into a salty waste", 33-34a) and provide ("He turns a desert into pools of water, a parched land into springs of water", 35), though no mention of wind is included here.

<sup>61</sup> Reymond, *L'eau* 178.

<sup>62</sup> Translating difficulties over whether the yam suph should be rendered as either "Red Sea" or "Reed Sea" is not germane to this paper. For an introduction to these and other problems, see John R. Huddleston, "Red Sea," *ABD* V 633-642.

<sup>63</sup> Literal- Jonah 4:8; figurative- Isa 27:8; Ezek 17:10; 19:12; Hos 13:15.

<sup>64</sup> East and south winds (teyman) are also mentioned in Ps 78:26 in the context of the wilderness wanderings. The immediate context mentions God blessing his unfaithful people by sending manna (vv. 24-25) and meat (vv. 27-29). Since there is no mention of the east wind within the narrative of the wilderness wanderings in Exodus, the use of the term in the psalm most logically refers to this event at the Red Sea which enabled the Israelites to reach the wilderness. While dischronologization such as this is not uncommon in narrative texts (see W. J. Martin, "'Dischronologized' Narrative in the Old Testament," *Congress Volume: Rome, 1968* [VTSup 17; Leiden: Brill, 1969] 175-186; David W. Baker, "The Consecutive Non-Perfective as Pluperfect in the Historical Books of the Hebrew Old Testament (Genesis - Kings)" [Regent College, Vancouver

S thesis, 1971], chronological rigour is even less necessary in poetic texts.

ay, God's Conflict 97-101; Mary Wakeman, *God's Battle with the Monster. A Study in Biblical Imagery* (Leiden: Brill, 1973)

ee discussions of dating, in which its oral composition is placed in the twelfth century and its writing in the tenth, in Douglas K. Stuart, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter* (M 13; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976); Frank Moore Cross and David Noel Freedman, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977); Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973) 121-125; David Noel Freedman, *Pottery, Poetry, and Prophecy: Studies in Early Hebrew Poetry* (Ann Arbor: Eisenbrauns, 1980) 176-178.

od's sovereign control over the Red Sea is also a motif in the New Testament, though without mention of wind; e.g. Acts 7:36; 1 Cor 10:1.

or a discussion of the significance of Mt Carmel as Canaanite religious site, see Harry O. Thompson, "Carmel, Mount," *ABD* 1: 874-875; M. J. Mulder, "Carmel," *ABD* 182-185.

or the religious significance of the bull/calf in Canaanite practice, see N. Wyatt, "The Bull," *DDD* 180-182 and the bibliography there.

A similar weather proverb, though with different wind directions, seemed to be common in Israel much later, since Jesus used two against the people in Luke 12:54-55: "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, 'It's going to rain'; and it happens. (55) And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat'; and it happens." Since the Palestinian wind bringing rain was not generally a north wind, as stated in this proverb (25:23), it has been suggested that the proverb has a non-Palestinian origin (J. van der Ploeg, "Prov. xxv 23," *VT* 3 [1953] 181-192; Raymond L'eau 9; Derek Kidner, *The Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary* [TOTC; London/Downers Grove: Tyndale/Inter-Varsity, 1973] 160). A primary weather pattern is also reflected in Jesus' teaching concerning the reception and rejection of his message being like wise or foolish builders (Matt 7:24-27). On both

builders “the rain fell, the floods came, and winds blew and beat upon the house.”

<sup>71</sup>See Reymond *L'eau* 11.

<sup>72</sup>The dates of the kings involved are: Ahab: 874-852 BC; Jehoram: 852-841 BC; Jehoshaphat: 873-849 BC (*NBD passim*).

<sup>73</sup>C. F. Keil, *The Books of the Kings* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950 rep. of German original) 304.

<sup>74</sup>Reymond, *L'eau* 43.

<sup>75</sup>Seismon, usually associated with turmoil by earthquake, in Matthew, and *lailaps*, ‘hurricane’ in Mark and Luke.

<sup>76</sup>Thalassa, Matthew and Mark, while Luke uses his customary, and more accurate *limnon*, ‘lake’.

<sup>77</sup>William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974) 177; Robert H. Gundry, *Mark : A Commentary on his Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993) 240.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>Lane, *Mark* 176; Walter Liefeld, “Luke,” *Expositor's Bible Commentary* 8, ed. F. E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995) 911.

<sup>80</sup>Gundry, Mark 243.

<sup>81</sup>R. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* (Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 2; Freiburg: Herder, 1976) 1, 246.

<sup>82</sup>Gundry, *Mark* 246.

<sup>83</sup>See J. D. Douglas, “Fear,” *NBD* 373-374.



<sup>8</sup>Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew : A Commentary on his Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) 299; Donald Carson, "Matthew," *Expositor's Bible Commentary* 8, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 195) 344.

<sup>9</sup>Used of Canaanite Baal; CTA 4.5.12; 4.3.18; 2.4.8, etc.; see Moshe Weinfeld, "'Rider of the Clouds' and 'Gatherer of the Clouds'" *JANES* 5 (1973) 421-426; Day, *God's Conflict* 31-32; Tremper Longman III, "The Divine Warrior: The New Testament Use of an Old Testament Motif," *WTJ* 44 (1982) 294-297. For other Canaanite (and Egyptian) motifs in Psalm 104, see the discussion and bibliography in Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 60-150: A Commentary*, transl. Hilton C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989) 295-299.

Gregory K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation : A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Carlisle/Grand Rapids: Paternoster/Eerdmans, 1999) 1042.

Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>David E. Aune, *Revelation 17-22* (Word Bible Commentary 52C; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998) 1175-1176; Beale, *Revelation* 1103. This also goes back even further, being an allusion to the river which flows out of Eden in Genesis 2:10-14; see ibid., Leon Morris, *The Revelation of St. John : An Introduction and Commentary* (TNTC; Leicester/ Grand Rapids: InterVarsity/ Eerdmans, 1983, rep. of 1969 edition) 248.

<sup>11</sup>Aune, *Revelation* 1117.



**Open Theism: "What is this? A new teaching? - and with authority!" (Mk 1:27)**

By Clark H. Pinnock\*

**Introduction**

Open theism is a controversial theological topic among North American evangelicals. People are becoming aware of it and debates are swirling around it. At the heart of it lies a vision of a relational God and what makes it controversial is the feature "current divine omniscience." Our aim, when we presented the model in 1994, was to bring evangelicals up to speed on the issues and to encourage them to appreciate God's activity more in relational and personal rather than abstract and deterministic terms. We now have scholars who held to the model already and hoped that others might be drawn to it if it were explained. We hoped it might become a source of theological renewal for us or (at least) a catalyst for ongoing reflection.<sup>1</sup>

The model goes by other names than open theism. We chose this term because "openness" was an attractive and unused metaphor which evoked the notion of God's open heart toward his creatures. It suggests the vision that we have of God's glory which is characterized by voluntarily self-limitation and self-sacrificing and which wields a divine power that delights more in nurturing than in subjugating creatures. Presenting a term like this (however) has made open theism a "local theology," that is, a theology developed by certain people in a certain place (by evangelicals within the North American evangelical coalition and pitched toward that audience). The downside of naming it openness is that it distances us from others who have the same convictions but use other language for it. We named it openness to give evangelicals a clear run at it as something fresh (the word made fresh!) but we left the impression (a wrong impression) that we were peddling novelties which we are not. This in turn energized opposition against us.

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The proposal has spawned vigorous polemics and put a strain on evangelical social space. Lines are being drawn in the sand and people are being pressed to decide whether they think open theism is tolerable as a legitimate evangelical option or whether it has to be purged from our ranks as a corrupting influence. It is testing our ability to get along with each other. One is taken aback by the way in which normally sound thinkers go ballistic and denounce open theism in inflammatory ways that are reminiscent of the way in which Arminius (an early free will theist) himself was treated.<sup>2</sup> Then again, it is not unusual for theologians who strike out in new directions to receive both eulogies and vilification in about equal measure. Besides, as the old saying goes, if you can't stand the heat, stay out of the kitchen. We have exposed a yawning gap between at least two orientations – it is not surprising that some would take great umbrage.

### **What is "open theism" theologically?**

Theologically, open theism is a version of free will theism. It is a relational and trinitarian doctrine with an emphasis on God as personal and interactive, both in the immanent triune nature and in the economic relationships which he enjoys with creatures. Call it "evangelical personalism" if you like. As a version of free will theism it holds that God could control the world if he wished to but that he chooses not to – for the sake of loving relationships. We do not think that God is ontologically limited as in process theology but that God voluntarily self-limits so that freely chosen loving relations would be possible. In giving us genuine, that is, libertarian, freedom, God gives up complete control over the decisions that are made and chose to create a world in which humans have significant powers of "say so." It means that creatures can do things that God does not want them to do. Whereas Calvinists hold to meticulous divine sovereignty, free will theists defend a general or limited sovereignty, more in keeping with God's dynamic world project. Instead of it being a prescribed matter down to the last detail, history is a real story even now unfolding with all its tensions and surprises. By contrast, high Calvinists believe that whatever occurs is willed by God (not merely permitted) and the world now is now exactly as it should be. Even terrible atrocities occur (it is said) for some higher and somehow greater good. Free will theists (however) believe that this would make God the author of evil. In our view, history is full of things that God did not want to happen. We acknowledge that God could dominate the world but chooses not to. By an act of self-limitation, God restrains his power for the sake of the creature such that, at this moment, God's will is not being done on earth as



even. It means that God took risks in creating a truly significant world. It means that, though God has goals, he makes use of open routes.<sup>3</sup>

Open theism does however add a new feature to standard free will theism. It is a "twist" which makes it different, namely, its understanding of divine omniscience as "current omniscience" or "present knowledge." As I will argue, it enjoys scriptural support and coheres with the open vision as a whole. We cannot see how humans can possess libertarian freedom, if God knows ahead of time exactly what they will do with us. We cannot see how God can be said to take risks, if he knows with absolute certainty exactly what is going to happen. Opting for current omniscience is a significant adjustment to standard free will theism but not (we think) a heterodox idea. We are not theological rationalists in proposing this model. We are well aware of how incomplete and inadequate theology is and we realize how much more truth there is than what anyone presently knows. We agree with the words of Alfred Lord Tennyson and take a modest stance.

"Our little systems have their day;  
They have their day and cease to be;  
They are but broken lights of thee,  
And thou, O Lord, art more than they."

(In Memoriam)

At the same time (however), there are words of knowledge given by the Spirit in which the old message is spoken into a new situation in such a way that the truth of Scripture is sharpened and its current meaning comes to light. Just to repeat the received wording of tradition can actually distort the message. God wants to enable us to speak the word of God in relevant ways into the contemporary situation. This is what we are attempting to do.

### **What is "open theism" historically?**

Open theism is a species of non-determinist theology and, to put a label on it ecclesiastically, it is a variant of Wesleyan/Arminian thinking. The model as a whole and for the most part is far from new but belongs to traditions of non-determinist theology which both precede and post-date Augustine. It is not a brew from hell. Many

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(I think most) over the centuries have rejected his view that God is the 'all-determining' and sole final cause of every event and have uphold human freedom and the importance of cooperation with God's will. We read the biblical story as an action packed and tension filled theo-drama which plays itself out in mysterious and complex way through divine interaction with human agents. In this interaction God is and always remains the senior partner but humans also play a significant role.

Open theism resonates with the Wesleyan/Arminian thought which influenced large segments of evangelicalism. This way of thinking has contributed much to the history of the doctrine of God. Most significantly it triggered the rehabilitation of two key truths, God's universal salvific will and God's relational nature. Arminius made a modest beginning when he adjusted Reformed theism by means of his insights concerning the divine self-limitation and when he said that determinism was not implied by divine omniscience because the future events themselves are the cause of God's knowledge of them. It was a beginning along the right path.<sup>4</sup>

In theology of course no one has the last word. Arminius (and Wesley) got thinking and charted a territory into which we can grow. One can appreciate them for taking risks but they remain men of their time and, all in all, theirs was a modest beginning. They put their foot in the door and opened it a crack. It was the beginning not the end of needed reform. They offered an adjustment to the Calvinist tradition which would over time become an alternative to it.<sup>5</sup> But more work would be needed and the work is continuing today. We have traveled far but not far enough. We have taken a stand against theological determinism but there are other issues. Denying that God is a risk taker will not do. The timelessness of God is not a biblical position. Impassability cannot stand. God's unchangeability must be revisited. We need to continue to grow as hearers of the word of God. Calvinists cannot stop the clock at 16 AD and take their last stand at the Synod of Dort as if the reformed tradition had not gone on developing since then. Similarly, the Wesleyan/Arminians, however much we admire our forebears, must move on. We must take developments in theology seriously. Karl Barth proves that Reformed theology has not stood still and that fact that Methodists like Miley and McCabe have debated the issue of divine foreknowledge over the years since Wesley shows that Wesleyan/Arminian traditions too are undergoing development.<sup>6</sup>

In contexts outside the evangelical sub-culture, the open view of God exists in different formats. John Polkinghorne (who publicly endorsed open theism at Baylor University in autumn, 2002) likes the language of kenosis, while others like Moltmann focus on the divine suffering, while Paul Fiddes develops these beliefs in a framework of social trinitarianism. We packaged relational theism for evangelicals under the label of open theism but many embrace it using different language. Besides the three we have just mentioned, other scholars hold to it, like Keith Ward, Richard Swinburne, Nicholas Wolterstorff, J. R. Lucas, W. H. Vanstone, and Eberhart Jungel. Thus it is that open theists enjoy good company and share assets with some fine theological minds. Even the most controversial part of it - the doctrine of current omniscience - even that element is endorsed by them. Is anyone calling Swinburne and Polkinghorne names? Are they being accused of being Pelagian, Socinian, or Whiteheadian? Why then do open theists offer these indignities practically on a daily basis from evangelical colleagues? What (I ask myself) can one do in the face of such ignorance and malice? One could (I suppose) walk away and abandon evangelicalism. Or, one can take the path of patience and persistence, not wanting to leave the field without making an effort to rescue evangelicalism from being ideologically hijacked. The name-calling happens because we operate in a milieu of immature theological reflection where a lot of ignorance lurks.

### **Ninety Percent, Ten Percent**

Open theism is a Wesleyan/Arminian model with a twist. Ninety percent of it is in agreement with these evangelically oriented theological traditions, while ten percent of it is contested. Even when it comes to the ten percent, the moves that open theism makes are not unprecedented, although they are certainly in the minority. Let us consider the ninety percent first.

God created the world for loving relations. From scripture as well as experience we know that love must be freely chosen. Therefore, God created us with the capacity for saying "yes" or "no" to God. But creating such a world spells risks for God, the risk that we may not choose to love and obey him. But it seems that God decided that it was a risk worth taking, the kind of risk which we experience as parents, when we hope that our children will follow in God's ways but are not able to guarantee it. The God of Christian faith is not a timeless, unchanging substance, totally in control of the world, but personal, relational, and triune, and characterized by self-sacrificing love. Central to the greatness of God for open theism is God's willingness to be self-limited

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for the sake of love. God opens himself up to real interaction with his creatures such that they actually have an effect on him. God opens himself to a certain vulnerability symbolized by the cross of Jesus. Theology in the past has not usually wanted to say this but open theists insist that we must say it.

Although it can be validated on other levels, open theism is primarily a biblical theology for me. Unlike process theism and even conventional theism, it does not begin with assumptions about what God "must be like" dictated by philosophical ideas which cause us to ignore aspects of the biblical witness. Its foundation is the triune relationality of God himself (the interactive social trinity) and the responsiveness, tenderness, pathos, dynamic rule, and risk taking for the sake of love which we see in the biblical narrative. We read the biblical meta-narrative as a real and unfolding story, not as a prescribed text of some pre-historical decree in which the author decides everything and the characters nothing. We object to theologies which deny the dynamism of salvation history. The character in a novel seems real enough but the fact is that she is a fictional literary figure who has no "say so" in the drama. She is not a person but an invention. She has no true reality and no significant freedom. She is only a thought in the mind of God. It's a one-way street - there is no real mutuality. History is a novel where the characters do exactly what the novelist decides. God maintains exhaustive control. Nothing happens except what is willed by God. The divine/human relationship is causal not personal - God the cause, man the effect.<sup>7</sup>

Authentic love is always accompanied by vulnerability. In human life, love is inauthentic love which seeks control like a possessive parent. Authentic love takes risks. It is precarious and it brings the risk of rejection. It is characterized by involvement rather than detachment. The God of the Bible is affected by his creation, delighted by beauty and grieved by its tragic aspects. Does not the life of Jesus reveal a God of love who participates in the world's sufferings? God freely chooses self-limitation and bestows human life so that it might happen that we will love God in return.<sup>8</sup>

Open theism calls for theological change. We want to carry "reformation" farther. The tilt towards divine hyper-transcendence has to be corrected. We must overcome the feeling of aloofness and inertness in God and get away from "the solitary narcissistic God who suffers from his own completeness," as Kasper has put it.<sup>9</sup> We seek a more coherent, non-determinist model than we find on offer. We are not rationalists but we do seek a little more conceptual intelligibility, even in the midst



at we know is a complexity of data. Theological confusion has been created by the merger of the Christian confession of God as compassionate, suffering, victorious love with speculative ideas about what must constitute true divinity - such as immutability, impassibility, eternity, unchangeability. Theology (for example) has often given the impression that God could not grieve over the suffering of the world and could not experience compassion within his being, etc. As a result, certain of the traditional attributes of God (I will not call them perfections) need to be re-formed in the light of the gospel. The God and Father of Jesus Christ is not the God (at least of some) of the world's philosophers. We have to speak somewhat differently. We have to say that the unity of God is no mathematical oneness but a living unity which includes diversity. We have to say that God does not have dead immutability but a dynamic constancy of character and purpose which includes movement and change. We have to say that God's power is not raw omnipotence but a sovereignty of love which is strong even in weakness. We have to say that God's grace is righteous and his righteousness always gracious. We have to say that God's omniscience is not a trivial know-it-allness but a deep wisdom accompanied by infinite resourcefulness. Open theists strive to learn who God is from God himself in the scriptures and not speculate so much about what God must be" in contrast to the world.<sup>10</sup>

Although not speculative and chiefly biblical, open theism enjoys a certain "it" with contemporary concerns. For example, it is apologetically promising in that it retains a vision of God which yields a dynamic cosmology and facilitates a dialogue between science and theology. For example, it is existentially fruitful in positing human "say yes." It gives people a reason to live passionately for God because our lives make a difference and our prayers can change things. Such practical implications are often what tip the balance for people in its favor. Isn't it part of what makes Christianity different in relation to Islam? That humankind is in the image of God and can say yes or no to God. Freedom is at the heart of the Christian story in a way it is not at the center of the Muslim story. When you think of it, isn't theology's function, not to identify the heretics, but to help people come to know and respond to God more completely? We are not to treat God as an "it" (are we?) but to foster the divine/relationship.

The smaller part of open theism, the ten percent, the twist, consists mostly of the idea of current omniscience.<sup>11</sup> It affirms divine omniscience but denies exhaustive infinite foreknowledge. It grants that God knows everything that can be known but that the future free actions of creatures, including even God's own future actions, are not yet

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reality and (therefore) cannot be known with complete certainty. God is free (for example) to do something new. We do not see this as "limited" foreknowledge because it views God as knowing everything that can be known at this point. On the other hand, open theists know, that while to some people this move may seem intelligible, to others it is an unwise and even a dangerous idea. It seems to involve many far-reaching implications the extent of which can seem (at least initially) disturbing. Even though the notion causes no great distress, it does draw fire from critics and constitute a point of vulnerability. Though not a new topic for the Wesleyan tradition, even theological allies are often disturbed by this move. So, why do open theists think the idea of current omniscience strengthens the model? Why do they carry what seem like a millstone around their necks?

The most important (if not the only) reason why I as an open theist believe the category of current omniscience are the scriptures which refer to aspects of the future which are unsettled and to possibilities in the future which are not yet actualized. Time and again, God is seen as confronting the unexpected or a being surprised by something that has happened or as experiencing regret, or a changing of his mind, or a showing of anger and frustration. God also speaks in conditional terms, tests people to know their character, and appears to be flexible. Are we wrong to take this line of teaching seriously? Does anyone doubt that such material exists? Of course, we can celebrate passages which extol God's massive knowledge of the future. It's just that the evidence we adduce on the other side prevents one from concluding that God has exhaustive definite foreknowledge. Our case rests, not on a few odd texts, strangely interpreted, but on an important biblical theme. If our critics choose to suppress this evidence, they may, but let them not charge us with treating scripture lightly. At the same time, I do not suppose that the issue can be resolved by proof texting. What people<sup>12</sup> think about it will also be influenced by broader considerations.

Indeed, Scripture aside, we are drawn to the scriptural motif of a partially unsettled future partly because it makes a lot of sense as an idea. If humans have genuine freedom, which the biblical narrative assumes and our experience confirms, how could it be otherwise? How could genuinely free decisions, which are (almost by definition) unpredictable in advance, be foreknown in their entirety even by God? If libertarian freedom is what God gave us, how can the hypothesis of exhaustive definite foreknowledge be true? On this point we are in agreement with the Calvinist critics: it just doesn't add up. What could the ontological grounding be for believing it? It seems

undermine what we are defending, if we cling to exhaustive definite foreknowledge. Conversely, we believe that belief in current omniscience strengthens the Wesleyan/Arminian understanding. If God created the world, and human beings in it possess free will, it will not be possible even for God to know precisely how they will exercise their freedom. Creating them limits what God can know.<sup>13</sup> Philosopher Keith Ward says: "God acts in such a way as to make creaturely freedom possible. It may seem that God could know the future completely and in every detail but in fact God renounces that knowledge in order to let finite creativity exist. There are necessities of the divine order which mean that God cannot exist in a state of unmixed bliss, of all-determining power and unrestricted knowledge, if there is to be a world of free and creative personal beings."<sup>14</sup>

John Polkinghorne is drawn to divine current omniscience as something that (he thinks) is implied by modern science. The passing of mechanistic theory, signaled by the rise of quantum physics and chaos theory, yields a vision of the universe which is open to both divine and human agency. It reveals a supple and subtle world of true becoming and whose future is open. We did not need science to tell us this but neither will we decline its witness. The future is not yet formed - in significant ways it is being formed as we go along. Of course, God knows what can happen and what he would have done in reply. God is prepared for whatever may be but he can also accomplish his purposes by contingent paths.<sup>15</sup>

Besides, what would be gained from believing in exhaustive definite foreknowledge? What's the big deal? Knowing exactly what's to come doesn't allow us to change anything. It's too late for that. It doesn't help to know the future, if it can't be altered. Not only are our hands tied but God's hands are bound too. Exhaustive definite foreknowledge offers God little or nothing by way of providential control. Even God cannot regulate a future which is settled. It doesn't seem to me that Wesleyan critics have anything to offer. As for the Calvinist critics, it's determinism that they are after - that God foreknows is what he has decided. God is a know-it- all quite independently of knowing anything.

So why do people hold on so tightly to exhaustive definite foreknowledge and insist that what we think is a sensible option so strongly? Basic conservatism prompts one to stick with the tried and true and not experiment. Plus, one can worry about the consequences (real or imagined) of holding to "only" current omniscience. Above all, I

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think we have taken away a security blanket. In open theism one has to trust God as vulnerable and competent much more than you had to in traditional thinking. Our critics are "protecting God" from getting into situations from which he may not be able to extricate himself. And, especially for conservative evangelicals like Tim Lahaye and millions like him, what about biblical prophecy? How can predictions, especially fairly precise sounding predictions, be explained without positing exhaustive definitive foreknowledge?<sup>16</sup> It would be true to say that the open theists have some explaining to do along these lines and that they owe it to the wider constituency to explain what their beliefs may mean for a whole range of doctrines. I accept that. Being a new kid on the block is exhilarating but it has its own burden.

### An Evangelical Mini-Crisis

Unintentionally, open theism is responsible for creating a mini-crisis in evangelicalism. Conservative evangelicals as traditionalists prefer a defense of traditional opinions to any reform of them. Especially so when they are confronted with something as surprising as divine present knowledge. Some of us have been discussing these ideas for years but, for most evangelicals, open theism came on like a thunderclap. For many, unfamiliar with the idea of new thinking in theology, open theism had to be a "whole new ball game" and "way-out there." This has become a startling example of postmodern conservative evangelical thought. Their first reaction was to ask how it could possibly be part of the faith once delivered? Thus some of them have pledged themselves to sweep the movement clean of it. Within evangelicalism in the past fifty years, Calvinists and Arminians may have lived together in relative peace. We have agreed to differ and allowed a both/and approach on many issues. But open theism has stirred things up and has brought to the surface in a provocative way the ancient differences between monergists and synergists. It has rocked the boat on many levels - the exegetical, the historical, the philosophical, and the existential that it is difficult to ignore. Add to this the fact that the evangelical world is not the best place to do constructive theology and it attracts a suspicious eye. Evangelicals like to be thought of as "biblical" Christians while in fact they are often stubborn traditionalists who strongly resist fresh insight into Scripture.

To understand the heat of the debate, one has to consider that the evangelical coalition is "neo-Calvinist," that is, it is dominated intellectually by paleo-Calvinists to whom open theism poses a real threat. Though used to tolerating what they call



ssical" Arminianism because of its perceived inconsistencies, they cannot so easily rate a version of it which removes the main problem and goes on the offensive. The Calvinists sense (rightly, I think) that this particular version of free will theism poses a greater threat than the older forms of it did. Therefore, it cannot be tolerated. A coherent form of free will theism is (to them) a very dangerous error indeed. Therefore, we have made a target and can do little to lessen the fury. The better we explain it, the worse its errors will seem. To them, open theism is an alternative to the Christian faith, not a legitimate option. For our part, we would prefer to continue to have the peaceful relations which we have had historically. But it may not be possible - something has changed. Open theism has raised the bar and forced the opposition to dig deeper. But what if they are out of answers? That would explain the panic.<sup>17</sup>

The fact is, that open theism is a variant of Wesleyan/Arminian theology which enjoys a respected place in the evangelical tradition and what happens to it may depend a great deal on what its natural allies do. I refer of course to other evangelical theological non-determinists which exist in large numbers, especially Wesleyan/Arminians, but also Pentecostals with their highly relational faith, free church believers, uncounted numbers of Baptists, etc, all these in large numbers who delight in the basic impulses of open theism as a whole but hesitate a little with the details. They recognize how close to their own way of thinking the open view of God is, as loving, relational, and self-sacrificing but they are quite uneasy about the idea of current omniscience. It is a moment of high suspense. What will they do? Will they refuse to countenance open theism as an option and join with the high Calvinists to sweep it from the table? Or, will they say, wait a minute? Let's give it more time. Let's think it through. I hope and pray that they will see Roger E. Olson's point and affirm open theism as a legitimate opinion for evangelicals in thinking about divine providence.<sup>18</sup> The well-known Wesley scholar, Randy L. Maddox, has shown that open theism, including current omniscience, has been discussed within Methodism for centuries and he even insists as likely that Wesley's response to open theism would have been one of acceptance. He also points to the John Miley exchange with Lorenzo D. McCabe over the acknowledgment in the late 1880's as evidence that for Wesleyans this debate is not new or extraordinary.<sup>19</sup> It would be nice then that the paleo-Calvinists would stop dictating the proper issues for our discussion. They should back off and let us enjoy our liberty.<sup>20</sup>

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I come cup in hand. I would really like it if Wesleyan/Arminians and others like them would declare that open theism is not a threat to evangelicals but a free version and a legitimate variant of their own relational and non-determinist thinking. I think they think it would be in their own self-interest to do so too. To speak frankly, I believe that the attack on open theism being engineered by paleo-Calvinist sectarians with an evangelicalism is not limited to us but extends to every form of synergism. Do we hear them wondering out loud whether any Wesleyan/Arminians are evangelicals, given that they are synergists. Olson refers to this in his article: "Don't hate me because I'm an Arminian."<sup>21</sup> Wesleyans need to consider the possibility that the present attack on open theism is part of a rejection of every form of free will theism. I think it would be wrongheaded for Wesleyan/Arminians to view open theism as a threat (like process theism is, for example). They need to try and see open theism as a version of their own vision, and perhaps even see its potential, under God, to re-invigorate these convictions and prompt a theological renaissance and spiritual awakening. What I urge them not to do is to join with the paleo-Calvinists who are bound and determined to kill the openness baby in the cradle. If they do so, I predict, that they will be the next to be attacked.

I have a suggestion and, in the words of Paul, "I think that I have the Spirit of God." (1 Cor 7:40) I offer it as a word of wisdom. Let's put off making a final judgment about open theism and allow the discussion to go on. (It will go on in any case.) Let's heed Gamaliel who said, if something like open theism is of human origin, it will fail. But, if it is of God, no one will be able to overcome it (Acts 5:33-39). Let's talk, let's research, and let's pray. It has not yet been proven that open theism is incompatible with other non-determinist traditions. Let's leave the door open for dialogue. Let's listen to one another. Let open theism be a player along with the others. Let's give it time to say what it has to say. By all means, let's work with the other options too. There are other ways to view the divine foreknowledge, for example: there is simple foreknowledge, middle knowledge, and timeless knowledge. Maybe support for the "twist" will grow or maybe not. At least, open theism can be a catalyst for further reflection as it is already proving to me. I think that this is a great time for all non-determinists. It is a day of opportunity - it is not a time for fratricide.

Consider Christopher A. Hall and John Sanders, *Does God Have a Future? A Debate On Divine Providence* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003).

Olson, *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition and Reform* ((Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1999), ch 28.

This happy phrase "goals with open routes" comes from John Sanders, *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 63-66, 230-35.

Regarding developments in Wesleyan thought, see Thomas A. Langford, *Practical Divinity: Theology in the Wesleyan Tradition* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983). M. Douglas Meeks, *The Future of the Methodist Theological Traditions* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985).

So Richard A. Muller, *God, Creation, and Providence in the Thought of Jacob Arminius* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1991), 281.

Randy L. Maddox, "Seeking a Response-able God: The Wesleyan Tradition and Process Theology" in Bryan P. Stone and Thomas J. Oord, editors *Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love: Wesleyan and Process Theologies in Dialogue* (Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 2001), 111-142.

John Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: 2002), 156-59.

Might it not be that the long history of creation signals a gentleness on God's part and his reference for a non-coercive creative process? Nancey Murphy and George Ellis, *On the Moral Nature of the Universe: Theology, Cosmology, and Ethics* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996).

Walter Kasper, *The God of Jesus Christ* (New York: Crossroad, 1986), 306.

Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeks Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 72-74.

<sup>11</sup> Viewing God as temporal is a new element which would be center of controversy were critics Thomists rather than Calvinists. As it is, the Calvinists do not use it against us because many of them have already conceded it (like Feinberg, Reymond, and Tiessen).

<sup>12</sup> An exhaustive presentation of the data in support of current omniscience is to be found in Lorenzo D. McCabe, *The Foreknowledge of God and Cognate Themes in Theology and Philosophy* (Cincinnati, OH: Hitchcock and Walden, 1878) and *Divine Nescience of Future Contingencies a Necessity* (New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1882). The two volumes are still available from Revival Theology Promotion, Box 9183, St Paul, Minnesota 55109. Gregory Boyd has re-presented some of this material in *God of the Possible: A Biblical Introduction to the Open View of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000).

<sup>13</sup> Bruce A. Ware, *God's Lesser Glory: The Diminished God of Open Theism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), ch 2. Richard L. Swinburne, *The Coherence of Theism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), ch 10.

<sup>14</sup> Keith Ward, "Cosmos and Kenosis" in John Polkinghorne, editor *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 161.

<sup>15</sup> John Polkinghorne, *Serious Talk: Science and Religion in Dialogue* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995), ix, 41, 54.

<sup>16</sup> Biblical prophecy is a complex phenomenon. The Bible places the emphasis more on God's promises than on his foreknowledge. For centuries people have hyped its witness for apologetic purposes and still do it today. They have not considered much how imprecise and figurative much of it is. Witness the incredible "Left Behind" films and their absurd "precision." We have underestimated the conditional aspect of prophecy and the degree to which predictions are really promises of what God plans to do. Plus, we fail to take account of God's prescience based on what has happened to this point and what is likely to happen. The foreknowledge of God is valid even from the point of view of current omniscience. I was amazed to find Gregory Boyd open to call his own position "neo-Molinist" and what that implies for a vast foreknowledge. See Jarvis



Beilby and Paul R. Eddy, editors *Divine Foreknowledge: Four Views* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2001), 144-48.

The reader must remember that "Reformed theology" for these evangelicals means paleo-Calvinism, the stern tradition of the Westminster Confession and the Synods of Dordt. It does not describe the Reformed theology of a Barth or a Moltmann or a H. Berkhof. For these scholars, paleo-Calvinism is a bit of a fossil. But in this discussion with such evangelicals, one has to deal with this anachronism and play the game.

Olson, *The Mosaic of Christian Belief: Twenty Centuries of Unity and Diversity* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 194-6.

Randy L. Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Books, 1994), 50-58. See also his essay on the Wesleyan tradition referred to above *Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love*.

I am sometimes asked how I have been able to stay calm in the face of fierce criticisms. Part of it is that I heed the gospel imperative to love my enemies and part of it is to see past the malice to ignorance. So many of the charges are so wide of the mark that I entertain the possibility that they do not know what they are saying. In other words, I keep hoping that the ignorance is corrigible and remain hopeful.

Roger E. Olson, *Christianity Today* September 6, 1999 87-94



## Open Theism: Framing the Discussion

Brenda B. Colijn

### Background

On November 5-6, 2002, Dr. Clark H. Pinnock delivered the annual Fall Lecture Series at Ashland Theological Seminary. The lecture series achieved everything a theologian could desire from such an event: it raised important theological issues; it encouraged participants to consider the implications of theology for life and devotion; it engaged the whole seminary community; and it required everyone, whatever their perspective, to reflect on their own understanding of God.

Open theism is a controversial issue within evangelicalism. It has been the focus of numerous books and articles, Internet web sites, and the 2001 annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society. It has led to thoughtful discussions, lively debates, and, on occasion, personal attacks and denunciations of heresy. How should we as evangelicals approach this issue? In what follows, I will give some background on open theism and attempt to locate it in relationship to Calvinism, classical Arminianism, and process thought. I will address several misconceptions about open theism and conclude with some reflections on how we might proceed.

Open theism is a movement that has grown up within the Arminian wing of evangelicalism. The movement has attracted biblical scholars, theologians, and philosophers; people associated with it include Clark Pinnock, John Sanders, Gregory Boyd, and a number of others. It is not a monolithic movement; those involved in it do not agree on every issue. This perspective has been developing for over twenty-five years. Some of its proponents had been involved in developing Arminian responses to Calvinism, resulting in the essay collections *Grace Unlimited* (1975) and *The Grace of God, the Will of Man* (1989).<sup>1</sup> Exploring the issues that divided Calvinists and Arminians led some of them to become dissatisfied with traditional Arminianism as well.

What happened for some was a collision between evangelical theology and evangelical piety. The doctrine of God as traditionally taught in seminaries seemed inadequate to deal with practical Christian life, particularly with personal tragedies. If God controls everything, how can we say that he is not responsible for the evil and suffering in the world? Why do we pray, if we believe that the future is already settled and prayer can't change anything? What is the character of the God we worship? Does God govern his creation through coercive power or through the self-denying love we see in Jesus? These questions and others led to the publication in 1994 of *The Openness of God*, in which several scholars proposed modifying some aspects of the traditional view

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of God in order to make it more biblical and more relevant to Christian experience. Since that time, numerous books have been published by scholars on both sides of the debate.<sup>3</sup> Open theists have argued that we should not understand God as a timeless, distant, impassive deity who decrees everything that happens, but as a dynamic, trinitarian community of love who desires to form real give-and-take relationships with human beings. To achieve this aim, God has chosen to create a world that allows human beings significant creaturely freedom—a world whose future is partly open even for God.

Open theism has come under intense fire from Calvinists, for at least three reasons. First, open theists are currently the most visible evangelical advocates of Arminianism, and therefore they represent the greatest challenge to evangelical Calvinism. Second, the primary theological strategy of Reformed theologians is to pack everything they can into the doctrine of God. The sovereignty of God is the theological starting point, and they have made God's exhaustive controlling sovereignty the basis for everything else in their system. They believe that the doctrine of God, when properly understood, logically leads to Calvinism. Arminians, in their view, are logically incoherent because they accept the traditional understanding of God but fail to recognize its logical implications.<sup>4</sup> When open theists critique the traditional doctrine of God, therefore, they are attacking the foundations of the Calvinist system.

Third, open theists have brought to the foreground the question of what different theological systems imply about the character of God. They have pointed out that the all-controlling God of Calvinism cannot be said to respond to human beings or to answer prayer. God always initiates, and prayer serves only to bring human beings into alignment with God's eternal will. It also makes no sense to say that the Calvinist God grieves at the sin and suffering of human beings, since he causes everything that happens to them. This picture of God is problematic for evangelical believers, whose devotional lives usually assume that God is quite different.

Some non-Calvinists have also reacted against open theism, although their reaction has been less vehement and has developed more slowly. Because open theism developed out of Arminianism, the contested issues tend to be more narrowly focused. Also, since free will theists pack less into the doctrine of God, their disagreements with open theists are usually less foundational.<sup>5</sup> The greater part of open theism is quite congenial to other varieties of free will theism, since it focuses on God's relationality and responsiveness.

The 2001 annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in Colorado Springs focused on drawing the boundaries of evangelicalism, with a particular view toward deciding whether open theism was inside or outside those boundaries. The membership passed a resolution affirming God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge



no other action.<sup>6</sup> A second resolution passed at the 2002 meeting raised the possibility that some proponents of open theism may be expelled from the society.

### **Central Issues in the Debate**

Open theists have argued that the early development of Christian theology was heavily influenced by Greek philosophy, resulting in a doctrine of God that was not very biblical.<sup>7</sup> This influence affects the doctrine of God in at least four areas. Space is too limited to explore these areas in detail, but I will outline the main points. For further discussion from different perspectives, see the books listed in the footnotes to this article.

**God and time.** Traditional theology presents God as timeless, standing outside of time and seeing all time in a single, timeless instant. This model creates a problem: how can a God who cannot experience time act in human history, as the Bible repeatedly claims? Evangelicals have come to a variety of conclusions on this issue. Open theists argue that God experiences successive time as we do; he remembers the past and anticipates the future. They usually affirm that God is also transcendent with respect to time, but that tends to be less well defined.

**God and change.** Traditional theology describes God as immutable, a quality that was interpreted by the church fathers as static perfection. Since God is perfect, any change in God would be change for the worse. When extended to the emotional realm, the idea of immutability means that God must be impassible—that is, he cannot feel emotions as we do. Since emotions change, feeling emotion would make God changeable and therefore imperfect. To maintain this perfection, God must be unconditioned (unaffected by creation). God acts upon creation, but God himself remains the Uncaused Cause and the Unmoved Mover.

The problems with this view are obvious. How can such a God actually respond to human beings or form relationships? How can such a God be said to love? Many theologians have been questioning the traditional understanding of God's immutability, although Reformed theologians have been the most resistant.<sup>8</sup> On this point, open theists agree with other free will theists. God's character and purposes do not change, but he alters his specific actions in response to the actions of human beings. For example, Jeremiah 18:1-11 describes how God will change his plans of judgment or blessing if the people concerned change in their attitudes and actions. So God's actions are partly dependent upon what we do—and on what we pray.

**God's sovereignty.** This is the issue that has traditionally divided Calvinists and Arminians. Does God have to control everything that happens in order to be sovereign? Calvinists argue that he does.<sup>9</sup> Any diminishing of God's direct control

diminishes God's sovereignty. Like other Arminians, open theists agree that God is sovereign, but they believe that he has chosen to exercise his sovereignty differently. He has chosen to grant human beings free will and allow them to make significant choices. Although God has established the boundaries of his ultimate purposes in creation, he allows human beings to make meaningful decisions within those boundaries—including the choice of whether or not to accept his gift of salvation.

**God's foreknowledge.** This is the most controversial aspect of open theism, and this is where open theists divide from classical Arminians. Calvinists contend that God knows the future in complete detail because he has predetermined it. Classical Arminians believe that God simply knows all that will happen in the future, but that his foreknowledge does not determine those events. Open theists respond that, if God knows the future in complete detail, then the future is settled and cannot be changed. God's knowledge of future events does not *cause* these events, but it renders them certain, because God's knowledge must be infallible. Thus, as the events occur, people do not have the freedom to do otherwise than God has foreseen from eternity. Since the future is fixed, prayer can never change anything except the attitude of the person praying.

According to open theists, God knows the past and present in exhaustive detail. He knows everything about the future that he has decided to do, so he can fulfill his prophecy and keep his promises. He also knows all the necessary consequences that will result from previous choices. But his knowledge of future human choices is only probable, not definite. Because he knows people better than they know themselves, he can predict their actions with a high degree of accuracy, but he does not know their actions with certainty. This view is known as presentism.

Opponents charge that open theists are limiting God's omniscience. Open theists deny this. They argue that we should understand God's omniscience just as we understand God's omnipotence. Classical theists have noted that if we simply say that God can do anything, this gives rise to logical absurdities, such as the question whether God can make a square circle or a rock that is too heavy for him to lift. Instead, we should say that God can do anything that is logically possible to do.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, open theists say that God knows all that it is possible to know—but that the future decisions of free creatures are not logically knowable. In other words, God knows the future perfectly—but he knows some of it as certainties and some of it as possibilities. The future is thus partly fixed and partly open.<sup>11</sup>

### Open Theism in Context

relationship world	God is the creator of the world. God is both immanent and transcendent.			God does not create the world, which is eternal. God is immanent only, like the soul of the world.
ability	God does not change in any respect.	God is constant in his character and purposes, but he changes his actions toward human beings as needed.		God evolves along with the world.
ignity	God controls everything.	God is in control but allows humans libertarian freedom (the freedom to choose otherwise).		God doesn't control anything.
edge does now?	Exhaustive definite foreknowledge		Presentism	?
	Past, present, and future in complete detail (because he has predetermined it)	Past, present, and future in complete detail (because he simply knows it)	Past and present in complete detail. Of the future he knows what he has decided that he will do (e.g., prophecy) and the necessary consequences of previous choices. He knows the future free decisions of others as probabilities, not as certainties.	The past and the present. Nothing of the future; God hopes to draw the world toward a more ideal state but cannot guarantee that this will happen.
	<b>Classical Calvinism</b>	<b>Classical Arminianism</b>	<b>Open theism</b>	<b>Process thought</b>
ponents	Augustine John Calvin B. Ware T. Schreiner	David Hunt	Clark Pinnock John Sanders Greg Boyd	A. N. Whitehead C. Hartshorne John Cobb

## Charting Open Theism

One of the liveliest topics in the debate over open theism concerns how to classify open theism. Can it be considered evangelical? Can it be considered orthodox at all? Is it just a watered-down version of process thought? The accompanying chart shows how open theism compares with Calvinism, classical Arminianism, and process thought in some of the areas I have just discussed. How one locates open theism depends upon what question one is asking.

On the most fundamental question, the God-world relationship, open theism aligns itself with Calvinism and classical Arminianism, all of which affirm that God created the world out of nothing and is both transcendent and immanent with respect to creation. In process thought, God did not create the world, which is eternal. God is immanent rather than transcendent with respect to the world and participates in the world's process of development.<sup>12</sup>

Views of God's immutability form a spectrum. Most Calvinists reject change in God. Since God determines everything, God has no need to change. At the other extreme, process thought pictures a God who evolves along with the world toward more ideal states of being. Between these views, open theism agrees with Arminianism that God's character and purposes do not change, but he changes his actions in response to the behavior of human beings.

Views of God's sovereignty are similar. Again open theism aligns itself with classical Arminianism as opposed to Calvinism, believing that God allows human freedom to will rather than causing all things. But all of these views differ from process thought, in which God is not really sovereign at all. Because he is evolving along with the world, God cannot exercise control over the world's development. God desires to draw the world toward greater perfection, but he cannot guarantee that this will actually happen.

On the question of God's knowledge, Calvinism joins with classical Arminianism in affirming God's exhaustive knowledge of past, present, and future. Open theism asserts that God knows past, present, and a good deal of the future. Process thought affirms God's knowledge of past and present but denies God's definite knowledge of the future.

On these four issues, open theism has more in common with classical Arminianism—and even with Calvinism—than it has in common with process thought. Beyond that, where one draws the line depends upon whether one thinks the issue of God's knowledge is more foundational than the issues of immutability and sovereignty. Is open theism simply another variety of Arminianism, to be evaluated as such, or is it in basic agreement with Calvinism, leaving open theism beyond the bounds of orthodoxy? Where is the great divide?



Having read and listened to several Calvinist polemics against open theism, I observed that Calvinist scholars have great difficulty attacking open theism without attacking Arminianism as well. This places them in some rhetorical difficulty, as they want to enlist Arminians in the effort to defeat open theism, but they cannot help but resist taking shots at their potential allies. For example, Paul Helm believes "what is at the heart of the contrast between open theism and classical theism is . . . a profoundly different appreciation of the plight of humankind and the saving grace of Christ." Open theism has "a shallow view of the need of humans and the power of God." Helm acknowledges that "[this] same point applies also to those who espouse Calvinism or middle knowledge." His objection boils down to the fact that open theists, like other non-Calvinists, reject irresistible grace.<sup>13</sup> With this rhetorical move, open theism has redefined "classical theism" to exclude all views except Calvinism. Similarly, Bruce Ware admits that his criticisms of open theism also apply to Arminianism.<sup>14</sup> Although he discusses open theism only briefly in *No Place for Sovereignty*, R. K. M. Wright regards it as a logical development in free will theism's inevitable drift toward liberalism: "[The] assumption of human autonomy creates a continual pressure toward finite godism," which he identifies as idolatry.<sup>15</sup>

The perspective of these scholars reinforces my own sense that the great divide indeed between Calvinism and all varieties of free will theism, open theism included. The issues illustrated in the accompanying chart seem to bear this out. One's view of God's foreknowledge is dependent upon one's view of the kind of world God chose to create and the kind of relationship God chose to establish with that world. For example, if an immutable God has created a world in which he controls everything that happens, he must know the future in exhaustive detail. If God is evolving along with his co-eternal world, he cannot know anything about the future with certainty. If God created a world of genuine give-and-take relationships with free human beings, then the future may not be completely predictable.

Although its model of divine foreknowledge is what makes open theism distinctive, this is a secondary point compared with the issues on which open theists and Arminians agree. For that reason, I would classify open theism as a version of Arminianism. Any limitations on God's foreknowledge were *freely chosen* by God when he decided what kind of world he would create. Different varieties of Arminianism operate with different theological models in other areas, as well. For example, Arminians subscribe to various theories of the atonement. They also disagree about whether election means God's choice of a people in Christ or God's choice of individuals for salvation on the basis of his foreknowledge of their response to the gospel. Some who are otherwise Arminian believe in eternal security. Disagreement

on the nature or extent of God's foreknowledge need not exclude open theism from the Arminian tradition.

### Where Do We Go from Here?

Before making some suggestions on how to proceed, I would like to address some misconceptions. First, open theism does not deny God's sovereignty. Like the early church fathers, the Eastern Orthodox tradition, the Roman Catholic tradition, the Anabaptist tradition, the Arminian/Wesleyan tradition, and all other non-Calvinist traditions, open theism asserts that God remains in control while allowing his creatures to make free decisions within the boundaries of his set purposes for creation. Second, open theism does not say that God does not know the future. As I have explained earlier, open theists affirm that God has extensive knowledge of the future. They reject exhaustive definite foreknowledge, the idea that God knows every detail of the future already settled. Third, open theism does not affect issues of salvation. While significant differences exist between Calvinist and Arminian views of salvation, open theists are in agreement with classical Arminians on these issues.

Fourth, open theists do not say that the outcome of God's plan for creation is in doubt. They sometimes use the analogy of a chess master playing a novice. The chess master does not need to know in advance what moves the novice will make. The chess master has such an extensive knowledge of possible moves and countermoves, as well as so much wisdom from experience, that he or she can handle any moves the novice makes and still win the game. God is the "infinitely intelligent chess player" who can anticipate any possible move and plan to counter it.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, unlike the chess master, God retains the ability to intervene coercively if necessary in order to ensure that his goals are achieved.

Finally, open theism does not violate inerrancy. Those who make this charge are confusing the authority of Scripture with the interpretation of Scripture. The differences between open theism and traditional theism arise from different interpretations of a Bible that all sides hold in equally high regard. In fact, open theism *depends upon* inerrancy, in that it affirms that the language of Scripture must be taken with utmost seriousness because it is divinely inspired. Most expositions of the doctrine of inerrancy have assumed that we should follow the plain sense of Scripture whenever possible, as open theists are attempting to do. The debates that open theists have with their critics over the interpretation of particular passages of Scripture would never take place in a liberal setting. But open theists, because of their commitment to Scripture, are obligated to consider every biblically based critique carefully and respond to it thoughtfully.

So where do we go from here? I would suggest that we should not be afraid of asking questions, because asking questions is how we discover truth. Questioning traditional doctrinal formulations in light of Scripture is an appropriate task for anyone who affirms the authority of Scripture. One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is to lead God's people into truth (John 16:13-15). The Anabaptist tradition, in which I cate myself, has always been convinced that doctrinal issues are best worked out within the body of believers functioning as a hermeneutical community. A community of believers who read Scripture in submission to Christ and to one another can be confident that the Holy Spirit will lead them to discern the mind of Christ.

In order to do this, however, we must keep talking to one another. I am deeply concerned about the efforts of some evangelicals to silence the discussion of open theism and disfellowship its proponents. Ironically, some of those attempting to do this are Calvinists who say they believe in God's exhaustive sovereignty. The reasons they give for their actions are the need to oppose false doctrine and prevent people from being led astray. Surely, in the Calvinist universe, people can never be led astray unless God wants them to be led astray. After all, God's will is never frustrated. Whether we are Calvinists or non-Calvinists, we can surely affirm that God in his providence can cope with open theism.

We must also be willing to give one another time to reflect on these issues. Most Calvinists will probably reject open theism, for the reasons mentioned earlier. However, non-Calvinist evangelicals need time to interact with open theism and evaluate it from within their own free will traditions. Open theism itself is still developing; constructive interaction should help all of us refine our theological models and make them more biblical. I would like to hope that such interaction could be conducted in a spirit of mutual love and concern for one another as brothers and sisters of Christ.

Open theists are asking important questions out of a desire to honor God and be faithful to Scripture. Whether we come to agree with them or not, their proposal deserves serious study and prayerful reflection, and they deserve the respect due to all members of the body of Christ. As we seek the mind of Christ on this matter, I hope that we can practice the adage adopted by the Brethren and other groups influenced by Arminianism: "In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity."

<sup>1</sup> Clark H. Pinnock, ed., *Grace Unlimited* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1975); Clark H. Pinnock, ed., *The Grace of God, the Will of Man: A Case for Arminianism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989).

## Open Theism: Framing the Discussion

<sup>2</sup> Clark H. Pinnock, Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker, and David Basinger, *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994).

<sup>3</sup> Books supporting open theism have included David Basinger, *The Case for Freewill Theism: A Philosophical Assessment* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996); Gregory T. Boyd, *God of the Possible: A Biblical Introduction to the Open View of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000); William Hasker, *Time, God, and Knowledge* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998); Clark H. Pinnock, *Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001); and John Sanders, *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998). Books opposing open theism have included Norman L. Geisler, *Creating God in the Image of Man? The New "Open" View of God – Neotheism's Dangerous Drift* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1997); Thomas R. Schreiner and Bruce Ware, eds., *Still Sovereign: Contemporary Perspectives on Election, Foreknowledge, and Grace* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000); Bruce A. Ware, *God's Lesser Glory: The Diminished God of Open Theism* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2000); and R. K. M. Wright, *No Place for Sovereignty: What's Wrong with Free Will Theism* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996). Wright's book deals with free will theism more generally and mentions open theism only briefly. Some of the books in InterVarsity's "four views" series usefully explore central issues in this debate: David and Randall Basinger, eds., *Predestination and Free Will: Four Views* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986); James K. Beilby and Paul R. Eddy, eds., *Divine Foreknowledge: Four Views* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001); and Gregory E. Ganssle, ed., *God & Time: Four Views* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> Clark Pinnock believes that Calvinists tolerate classical Arminians because they believe Arminians are simply confused. According to Pinnock, Calvinists perceive open theism as a greater threat because it is more logically coherent than classical Arminianism. *Most Moved Mover*, 12, 14.

<sup>5</sup> For example, simple foreknowledge proponent David Hunt observes: "So while I disagree with Boyd on whether God changes his mind and on the best way to interpret Scripture, I can't get too exercised over our differences. No one's salvation hangs on this dispute." Beilby and Eddy, 54. However, Robert E. Picirilli argues that open theism's rejection of God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge is significant enough that it cannot be considered a variety of Arminianism. "An Arminian Response to John Sanders's *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence*," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44 (September 2001): 491.

<sup>6</sup> "Scholars Vote: God Knows Future," *Christianity Today*, 7 January 2002, 21.



<sup>7</sup> *Openness of God*, 59-60.

<sup>8</sup> For an example of a Reformed theologian who modifies God's immutability and possibility, see Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd. ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 308.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols., ed. John T. Neill (Philadelphia: Westminster, 60), Book I, Chapter 16, Section 3.

<sup>10</sup> See Erickson, 303.

<sup>11</sup> See Boyd, 15-17.

<sup>12</sup> For an introduction to process thought, see John B. Cobb and David R. Griffin, *Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976). For interactions between open theism and process thought, see Clark H. Pinnock, "Between Classical and Process Theism," in *Process Theology*, ed. Ronald Nash (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 313-327; and John B. Cobb and Clark H. Pinnock, *Searching for an Adequate God: A Dialogue Between Process Theism and Free Will Theists* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000).

<sup>13</sup> Beilby and Eddy, 64.

<sup>14</sup> Ware, 42.

<sup>15</sup> Wright, 229, 226.

<sup>16</sup> Boyd, 127.



## A Biblical Theology of Women in Leadership

by Brenda B. Colijn\*

### Introduction

Too often the discussion of women in leadership has focused on the exegesis of individual passages and the study of individual words. In some cases, those on different sides of the issue cannot even agree on which biblical passages are relevant to the discussion.<sup>1</sup> The church badly needs to move beyond the level of exegesis to develop a constructive biblical theology of women in leadership.<sup>2</sup>

In what follows, I will attempt to outline such a theology by tracing women's leadership through salvation history as it is granted in creation, crippled in the fall, restored in redemption, and validated in the consummation. I will then suggest some theological principles to guide us in our reflections. Although I will make some exegetical comments on central texts, I will not answer other exegetical views in detail. That has been done effectively by others.<sup>3</sup> My primary purpose is to construct a constructive biblical theology.

### Creation

Understanding the theological significance of the creation narratives involves understanding them in context as stories. The first creation narrative (Genesis 1:1-31) describes the origin of human beings as a creation of God and their relationship to the rest of creation. The second creation narrative (Genesis 2:18-25) describes the relationship of man and woman to each other. Proponents of restricted roles for women tend to emphasize the second creation narrative, while egalitarians tend to emphasize the first.<sup>4</sup> Both narratives, however, yield significant insights when considered *as stories* rather than as texts to mine for exegetical ammunition.

According to Genesis 1, man and woman are the crown of creation, bearing the image of God and serving as stewards of God's creation. Man and woman are created in God's image: "So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (Gen. 1:27).<sup>5</sup> The Hebrew text says that God created 'ādām in the image of God. In this instance, 'ādām is not the name of a man but of the species, making a play on words with the earth ('adāmā) from which the creature was made. It has the sense of our modern word "earthling."<sup>6</sup> In this instance 'ādām is plural, referring to both male and female, as is the case in Genesis

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## A Biblical Theology of Women in Leadership

5:2: "Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them 'Humankind' [Hebrew, *'ādām*] when they were created."<sup>7</sup>

In Genesis 1:27, "image of God" and "male and female" appear in parallelism suggesting that the author saw a connection between the image of God and human nature as "male and female." The parallelism implies that both male and female needed to fully reflect the image of God.<sup>8</sup> Some authors have suggested that the diversity-in-unity of male and female humanity reflects the diversity-in-unity of the Triune God.<sup>9</sup> Man and woman together are given dominion: "God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth'" (Gen. 1:28). No distinction is made between the man's and woman's roles.

According to Genesis 2, man and woman come together in marriage because of their origin in unity. The story begins in verse 18, when God says, "It is not good that the man should be alone." It goes on to describe the creation of woman from one of the ribs of the man. It ends with the declaration that man and woman become one flesh in marriage because they were one flesh to begin with: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh" (v. 23-24).

Besides their unity, the narrative stresses the companionship, correspondence, and partnership of male and female. The differentiation of man and woman is rooted in the need of human beings for companionship, the recognition that it is not good for them to be alone. None of the animals is suitable for providing that companionship (Gen. 2:20). The word *k'negdô* in 2:18, translated as "meet" in the King James version and "suitable" in the NIV, means "corresponding to." Unlike the animals, the woman was created specifically to correspond to the man. The man recognizes this correspondence when he exclaims that she is "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (v. 23). Because of that correspondence, she can serve as his companion and partner (NRSV's "a helper as his partner").

The Hebrew word *'ezer* (2:18), translated "help" or "helper," occurs in noun and verb forms about 110 times in the Old Testament. The Brown-Driver-Briggs lexicon renders it as "help" or "succor" (aid given to someone in distress).<sup>10</sup> It often refers to God as the helper of Israel, as in Psalm 54: "But surely, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life" (v. 4). Other times it refers to a military or political ally (Job 10:4; 1 Kgs. 1:7). Unlike the English word "helper," it never has the sense of subordinate. David L. Thompson expresses the sense of *'ezer* as "strong agent who renders indispensable aid" or "one who rescues." He notes, "The aid rendered is indispensable, often meaning the difference between survival or destruction."<sup>11</sup> For example, God is called *'ezer* because he delivers the poor and needy (Ps. 72:12).



rescues Israel from bondage and distress (Ps. 107:12-14), and saves the lives of those who call on him (Ps. 30:10; 54:4). Brown-Driver-Briggs translates the complete phrase *l'k'negdô* as "a help *corresponding to him* i.e. equal and adequate to himself."<sup>12</sup> In

the context of the Genesis story, the woman is the man's deliverer in that she rescues him from his loneliness.<sup>13</sup> She is his ally because she is equipped to work with him in the task of stewardship given by God to humankind.

Finally, the man and woman are naked but feel no shame (v. 25). Contrary to the views of some of the church fathers, this verse cannot mean they have no sexual relations; after all, they have already been given the command to be fruitful and multiply. It means that they accept their own sexuality and that of the other person without insecurity. Their complete trust in God and in one another gives them the freedom to be vulnerable without fear.

No one could read the Genesis creation narratives on their own terms and have the subordination of women from them. Subordination must be imported into the text from elsewhere. The most common source is 1 Timothy 2:11-15, where Paul gives his restrictions on women teaching in Ephesus on Eve's being second in creation and first in sin.<sup>14</sup> But Paul's *ad hoc* rationale for his counsel to Timothy should not be fed back into the Genesis accounts as an interpretive presupposition. The Genesis accounts should be read in light of their own intentions.

With the entry of sin into the world, discord and domination enter human relationships (Genesis 3). Unity and mutuality give way to shame, blame, and alienation. As their eyes are opened, the man and woman are immediately ashamed of their nakedness (v. 7). Now their sexuality divides them rather than unites them. It becomes a source of anxiety. Shame distorts their relationship with one another and their relationship with God (v. 10). When God confronts them about their sin, the man blames the woman, and the woman blames the serpent (v. 12-13).

In confronting them, "God . . . holds each accountable and addresses each as possible."<sup>15</sup> Contrary to popular opinion, the man and woman are not cursed for their sin. Only the ground and the serpent are cursed (v. 14, 17). Nevertheless, both man and woman must face the consequences of their sin, which involve their alienation from the rest of creation and from each other. Both man and woman will express their creativity through pain, as the man struggles to make a living from the earth and the woman struggles to bring children to birth (v. 16-19). Their partnership becomes a hierarchy, as the man rules over the woman, yet the woman still desires him (v. 16).

Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen suggests that the effects of the fall reflect the

particular ways in which the man and the woman abused their nature as beings created in the image of God. She focuses on the aspects of "sociability and accountable dominion." As we saw earlier, man and woman were created as social beings and were given stewardship of the creation. However, the woman "abused her dominion" when she asserted her own will above God's command. The man "abused his sociability"

when he chose solidarity with his wife rather than obedience to God. As a consequence, as described in Genesis 3:16, man and woman tend to have characteristic problems in the areas in which they sinned, and they compensate for these by overemphasizing the other aspect of their nature. The man expresses his damaged sociability by dominating his wife. The woman submerges herself in relationships, even abusive ones—in order to avoid accountable dominion.<sup>16</sup>

The damage continues to propagate. In the next chapter of Genesis, the destructive alienation brought about by the fall reaches its ultimate consequence in the murder of Abel by his brother Cain. This picture of life after the fall is descriptive rather than prescriptive. Domination and death are not expressions of God's will for human beings. As evidence of this, God already provides a hint of redemption, with the promise of the woman's seed who will crush the serpent's head (v. 15).

## Redemption

The work of Christ opens a new era in relations between human beings and God. The change is so radical that Paul calls it a new creation. Believers participate in this new creation as they are united with Christ by faith (2 Cor. 5:17). Women participate in the inauguration of this new era at Pentecost, where they are among the recipients of the promised Holy Spirit (Acts 2:16-21).<sup>17</sup> The pouring out of the Spirit on both women and men is specified as the sign that the day of fulfillment has come (Joel 2:28-29). In 2 Corinthians 6, Paul emphasizes the participation of women in redemption by inserting "and daughters" into an allusion to the messianic promise of Samuel 7:14: "and I will be your father, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:18).<sup>18</sup>

The work of Christ reverses the effects of the fall. As the Last Adam, Jesus undoes the damage done by the first Adam, and his obedience brings righteousness and life "much more surely" than Adam's sin brought condemnation and death (Rom. 5:19; 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 45-49). This suggests that the patterns of domination introduced by the fall should be eliminated in redemption.

In his teaching on divorce, Jesus indicates his desire to restore marriage to God's original creation intentions (Matt. 19:4-5).<sup>19</sup> Paul says that relationships between Christians are to be characterized by mutual submission (Eph. 5:21). In this context

domination of the wife by the husband gives way to self-sacrificial love modeled on the standard of Christ's love for the church (Eph. 5:22-32). Sexual relations in marriage should be guided by mutuality and sensitivity to the needs of the other (1 Cor. 7:5). Leadership among God's people is not to be a matter of domination and authority but of loving servanthood modeled on Christ (Mark 9:33-37; 10:42-45; John 13:1-17).

In Christ, the most fundamental human divisions are overcome. Jews and

Gentiles are no longer two hostile peoples but are both part of the "one new humanity" that God is creating through Christ (Eph. 2:15). The great declaration of this new unity is found in Galatians 3:28: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Paul's expression "male and female" seems to be a deliberate echo of the Genesis creation accounts.<sup>20</sup> Some have argued that this verse means only that men and women are equal in the spiritual realm or the sphere of salvation: they stand on the same footing before God. It is true that the primary emphasis of the verse is unity, not equality. But the New Testament knows nothing of a salvation that is purely private or "spiritual" and has no social implications. The implications for male and female would be the same as the implications for Jew and Gentile and for slave and free. In the church, these formerly divided groups met on equal terms. Jews and Gentiles shared table fellowship. Both Gentiles and slaves served as leaders in the church. For Paul, "in Christ" encompassed the whole of a Christian's reality.

In this new era, women take on new responsibilities. In Judaism, the sign of the covenant, circumcision, was available only to men. As Christians, both women and men are recipients of baptism (1 Cor. 12:13), the sign of belonging to God's people and the sign of our universal ordination.<sup>21</sup> Through their faith in Christ, women become heirs of Abraham according to God's promise (Gal. 3:29), fellow heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17), and joint heirs with men (1 Pet. 3:7). As members of the body of Christ, women are given spiritual gifts as the Holy Spirit chooses, which are to be used for the building up of the church (1 Cor. 12:4-31; Eph. 4:7-16; 1 Pet. 4:10-11). Some women in the first century exercised leadership functions, serving as prophets, teachers, deacons, and apostles (Acts 18:26; 21:9; Rom. 16:1-2, 7; 1 Cor. 11:5, 13; 1 Tim. 3:11-12).<sup>22</sup> Prophets apparently also had a teaching role, since their ministry served to edify the church (1 Cor. 14:1-5).

Like all Christians who live between Pentecost and the consummation, women live in the tension between the "already" and the "not yet"—experiencing the power and gifts of the age to come while living in the present unredeemed age (Rom. 8:9-30; 2 Cor. 4:7-18). This tension affects women in some especially poignant ways as they

attempt to live out their callings. In the first century context, this tension led the church to accept some restrictions on women's roles. The New Testament writers counsel the congregations to respect cultural institutions when they do not contradict the gospel so that the progress of the gospel will not be hindered (1 Pet. 2:13; Titus 2:5).

This caution comes out most clearly in the New Testament instructions for households, the so-called domestic codes. Yet even these have a striking mutuality when seen in the context of their times, both in the instructions they give the culturally dominant partner and in the respect they accord the culturally subordinate partner. Today we bring the gospel into disrepute in American culture when we forbid the full

participation of women in ministry. This hinders the witness of the church. Why should women receive the gospel as good news if they perceive that they are more respected in the world than in the church? Women in leadership today must have prayerful sensitivity to discern when they should gracefully yield to restrictions on their ministries and when they must "obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29; NIV).

### Consummation

The "already/not yet" tension will be resolved in the final act of salvation history, the consummation. The new creation will be complete, and believers will receive their inheritance (Rev. 21:1-7). The image of God damaged by the Fall will be fully restored. Women and men will be glorified, as they are perfected and brought to complete Christlikeness in their resurrected bodies (Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 15:12-58; 2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:23-24; Heb. 6:1; 1 John 3:2). As one writer has pointed out, the doctrine of the resurrection of the body means that sexual differentiation will continue into eternity.<sup>24</sup>

The children of God will be revealed and vindicated (Rom. 8:19).<sup>25</sup> Men and women—and even creation itself—will fully experience the "glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21; NIV). God will reveal hidden deeds and the secrets of our hearts (Matt. 10:26; 25:31-46; Rom. 2:16). Those who have served in silence and obscurity will be acknowledged. The trust and freedom to be vulnerable that existed in the Garden will be restored and surpassed. We will know fully as we have been fully known (1 Cor. 13:9-12). This knowledge will be in the context of love (1 Cor. 13:1-3; John 4:7-12).

Relationships in the consummation will be fully restored. Loneliness and isolation will be banished, replaced by face-to-face fellowship with God and with other believers, celebrated as a banquet (Matt. 8:11; 22:2). But this is not merely a return to the relationships of Eden. Jesus told the Sadducees that in the consummation there would be no marrying nor giving in marriage (Luke 20:34-6). This implies that



marriage, even as it was known in the Garden, will no longer exist. Moreover, since it specifically mentions male and female roles in the act of marriage (marrying and being given in marriage), this implies that the most basic gender-based role distinctions will be transcended. Perhaps the intimacy and immediacy of relationship in the consummation will eliminate the "aloneness" that gave rise to marriage in the first place.

Eternity will be a Sabbath rest from the struggles of life and leadership (Heb. 4:1, 18; 4:1-11; Rev. 14:13b). Women will have a home that lasts (Heb. 11:10). There will be no more regrets or misplaced desires or unfulfilled longings.<sup>26</sup> God will finish all suffering and pain and will wipe away every tear (Rev. 21:4). Appropriate dominion will be finally restored, as all the servants of God, women and men, reign

"forever and ever" (Rev. 22:5). And women leaders who have given their lives in service to God will hear the only affirmation that finally matters: "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness" (Matt. 25:14-30; NIV).

### **Theological Principles**

The full participation of women in church leadership is affirmed by salvation history, by the nature of God, and by the nature of the church. Salvation history directs us to ground our theology in creation and redemption rather than in the fall.<sup>27</sup> Non-egalitarians attempt to do this by locating the subordination of women in the creation narratives, but this interpretation cannot be sustained. Whatever the attitude of the author of the Genesis narratives may have been, female subordination is simply not one of the concerns of the stories.

Despite their references to the creation stories, non-egalitarians theologize from the fall and make it normative. This depreciates the work of Christ in overcoming the destructive effects of the fall. Non-egalitarians also tend to apply their hermeneutic selectively to Genesis 3: they expect women to continue to be subordinate, but they do not expect men to continue to earn their living through laborious agricultural work!

The distorted relationships resulting from the fall reflect neither God's creation intentions nor God's eschatological goals for creation. Where the church chooses to locate itself in the already/not yet tension is crucial for its witness. The perspective of the New Testament would suggest that the church is called to live by the principles of God's eschatological kingdom today as a witness to the unredeemed world.<sup>28</sup>

The nature of God also confirms the importance of women in church leadership. God is not a male deity but relates to human beings in both typically masculine and typically feminine ways. The Old Testament portrays God as both a

father who protects and defends and a mother who gives birth and nurses (Deut. 1:31; Is. 49:13-15). This breadth of imagery means that the participation of both men and women in ministry is necessary to fully reflect the nature of God.<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, an orthodox understanding of the Trinity provides a model for the full participation of women in leadership. The Trinity is the preeminent example of mutuality and reciprocity. Father, Son, and Spirit form a community of mutual, self-giving love. God's people, including those in leadership, should reflect God's nature as a community of love. "In the midst of a broken world, our Lord calls us to mirror as much as possible that ideal community of love which reflects his own character."<sup>30</sup> In the Gospel of John, Jesus identifies love and unity as the preeminent marks that should characterize the church's life. They stamp us as his disciples and enable us to participate in the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son (13:34-35; 17:20-23).

This suggests that the church, if it is functioning properly, is the best analogy for the Trinity that we can offer the world.

By contrast, the hierarchical use of the Trinity to model "equal in essence, different in function" for men and women is a misinterpretation and misapplication of the doctrine of the Trinity. It posits an unorthodox subordination within the Trinity, turning the functional subordination of the Son during his earthly life into an eternal subordination in order to argue the permanent subordination of women.<sup>31</sup> The traditional orthodox understanding of the Trinity, as expressed in the Athanasian Creed, is that "in this Trinity none is afore, or after another: none is greater, or less than another . . . But the whole three Persons are coeternal, and coequal."<sup>32</sup> Thus the persons of the Trinity are equal both in essence and in status. Any argument for subordination within the eternal Trinity leaves itself open to charges of Arianism or tritheism.

In its application to women, the hierarchical Trinitarian analogy fails on three counts. First, it is an unbiblical application of the Son's submission to the Father, which the New Testament writers use as a model for all believers' submission to God and to one another (Phil. 2:1-11), not for the submission of one gender to another. Second, while true functional subordination is voluntary, selective, and temporary, for the purpose of completing particular tasks, the subordination assigned to women is involuntary, universal, and permanent. Finally, the analogy is logically contradictory in that it bases "functional" differences (church offices) solely on an aspect of someone's essential nature (gender).<sup>33</sup> In former times, when the church taught that women were inherently inferior to men, it was logical to conclude that they should serve subordinate functions in the church. Today, however, those who want to affirm women's essential equality while restricting them to subordinate functions find

mselves in a logically indefensible position.<sup>34</sup>

The nature of the church as the body of Christ, empowered by the Spirit to model Christlikeness, requires the participation of women in leadership. Since the Holy Spirit sovereignly distributes the gifts necessary for the functioning of the church, those Spirit-given gifts, not gender, should determine which functions individuals fulfill in the church. Framing a discussion of ministry in terms of power and authority distorts the nature of Christian ministry. It suggests that we are still asking who is the greatest, and we have not understood Jesus' injunction that leadership means service rather than domination.

The argument that only males can effectively represent Christ in leadership misunderstands the nature of the Christlikeness that leaders are called to model. Scripture calls believers to model Christ's love, obedience, patience, humility, compassion, and nonretaliation, but never his maleness. Jesus' Jewishness is much more theologically significant than his maleness, since it identifies him as the Messiah of Israel, but no Christian theologian argues that all church leaders must be Jewish.

The issue of representation is more critical for those traditions that view ministers as priests. This view is problematic on New Testament grounds, since the New Testament nowhere describes church leaders as priests. In fact, all believers are called to be priests, with Christ as their high priest (Heb. 9:11-14; 10:11-14, 19-25; 1 Pet. 2:9). Even if we grant the model of minister as priest, however, some scholars question whether it was the priest's role to represent God to humanity at all. They believe that the priest represented the people to God, while the prophet represented God to the people. If this is so, the prophetic ministry of women in both Old and New Testaments could suggest that maleness is not necessary in order to represent God.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, a *representative* of God need not also be a *representation* of God. Leaders (and all believers) are called to be Christ's ambassadors, not his impersonators (2 Cor. 5:20). It is the Holy Spirit, not Christian leaders, whose job it is to make Christ personally present in the church today.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, if we take salvation history seriously, if we have an orthodox view of the Trinity, and if we understand the church to be the body of Christ edified and led by Spirit-gifted persons, we are drawn to the conclusion that women should participate in church leadership on the same basis as men. While a few passages of Scripture can be problematic if they are scrutinized in isolation from their contexts, the whole of biblical revelation, as well as the breadth of theological reflection, points toward the freedom and the responsibility of women to respond to the call of God on their lives wherever it finds them—whether into the nursery or into the pastorate.

## Conclusion

The challenge for those of us who are women in church leadership is to live redemptive witness in the midst of a world—and all too often, a church—that incompletely redeemed. With the rest of Christ's body, we are called to point the way to the coming of God's kingdom in its fullness. We must be faithful to God's call in ways that reflect both God's truth and God's love—the love that “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” (1 Cor. 13:7). A constructive and contextual biblical theology can nurture and sustain us in this task.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Willard M. Swartley, *Slavery Sabbath War and Women: Case Issues in Biblical Interpretation* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1983), 183-184.

<sup>2</sup> Stanley J. Grenz and Denise Muir Kjesbo attempt to go beyond exegesis to “speak about broader theological themes” in their very valuable book, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 142. In general, egalitarian interpreters have been more sensitive to biblical theology and developments in salvation history than have non-egalitarians, who want to locate female subordination in specific texts that they believe express God's eternal will. In a recent article, David L. Thompson has argued that “attempts either to support or to deny egalitarian relationships between men and women solely on the basis of the interpretation of individual biblical texts in their contexts lead inevitably to eisegesis—to reading the interpreter's agenda into the text.” “Women, Men, Slavery and the Bible: Hermeneutical Inquiries,” *Christian Scholar's Review* 25/3 (1996): 327.

<sup>3</sup> Among the best resources on exegetical issues are the following: Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women & Wives: Marriage and Women's Ministry in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1992); Gordon Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, New International Bible Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988); and *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987).

<sup>4</sup> Swartley, 184.

<sup>5</sup> All biblical quotations will be taken from the NRSV unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>6</sup> Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, *Good News for Women: A Biblical Picture of Gender Equality* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 124.

<sup>7</sup> Aida Besançon Spencer, *Beyond the Curse: Women Called to Ministry* (Nashville: Nelson, 1985), 21-22.

<sup>8</sup> Spencer, 21.



2, for example, Grenz and Kjesbo, 71. This view is especially associated with Karl Barth. According to Barth, humanity was created to stand in an "I-Thou" relationship to God. Theological writers do not ground the image of God in humanity's "intellectual and moral talents and abilities" but in the fact "that God has created him male and female, that he is this being in differentiation and relationship, and therefore in natural fellowship with God." *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 3, part 1 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958), 185.

Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, Charles A. Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1979, s.v. "עָרַךְ."

Thompson, 328. He argues that none of the definitions in the standard lexicons are strong enough to express the "near-rescue level aid" provided.

DB, s.v. "עָרַךְ."

Grenz and Kjesbo, 165.

For discussions of this passage, see Keener, 113-117; Grenz and Kjesbo, 168-169.

Grenz and Kjesbo, 166.

Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, *Gender and Grace: Love, Work, and Parenting in a Changing World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 39, 43, 47. Several scholars have suggested that there may be different characteristic sins for men and women. In an influential article in 1960, Valerie C. Saiving argued that while masculine sin may be characterized by terms such as "pride" and "will to power," feminine sin might be better described as "triviality, intractability, and diffuseness . . . dependence upon others for one's own self-definition . . . in short, underdevelopment or negation of the self." "The Human Situation: A Feminine View," *Journal of Religion* 40 (April 1960): 109.

Van Leeuwen calls Pentecost "women's emancipation day" (35).

John R. Kohlenberger III, "Understanding the Current Controversy over Bible Translations" (paper delivered at the CBE International Convention, 14 July 1997), 17-18. As Kohlenberger observes, this puts Paul on the side of inclusive language translations!

Gilbert Bilezikian, "Hierarchist and Egalitarian Enculturations," *JETS* 30 (December 1987): 32.

Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 7.

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<sup>21</sup> Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Vancouver: Regent College, 2000), 566 (page citation is to reprint edition).

<sup>22</sup> Early commentators understood the "Junia" of Romans 16:7 to be a woman. John Chrysostom observed, "Think how great the devotion of this woman must have been, that she should be worthy to be called an apostle!" *Homilies on Romans*, cited in Gerald Bray, ed., *Roman Commentaries: Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*, ed. Thomas C. Oden (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 372.

<sup>23</sup> For example, David L. Balch observes that the earlier New Testament household codes stand out from other contemporary examples in that they address slaves directly as responsible persons and members of the Christian community. He believes that modern Christians often overlook the strong integrating effect that the Christian community would have had on members separated by social divisions. "Household Codes," in *Greco-Roman Literature and the New Testament*, ed. David E. Aune (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 33. He argues that the New Testament domestic codes had an apologetic function in persuading the larger society that Christianity was not a threat to the social order. *Let Wives Be Submissive: The Domestic Code in 1 Peter*, SBL Monograph Series (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981), 109, 121. See also James L. Bailey and Lyle D. Vander Broek, *Literary Forms in the New Testament: A Handbook* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 69-71; and John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 174.

<sup>24</sup> Glen Scorgie, "Are We On the Same Page? An Evangelical Response to Germaine Greer's *Whole Woman*," *Priscilla Papers* 15 (Fall 2001): 4.

<sup>25</sup> Bernard Ramm says that glorification will include the "final, perfect, and eternal vindication of the believer. *Them He Glorified: A Systematic Study of the Doctrine of Glorification* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), 67.

<sup>26</sup> "Sister Macrina taught Gregory of Nyssa that the blessed will be like God insofar as they can contemplate the beautiful in him, without regret or inordinate desire or unfulfilled expectation." Thomas C. Oden, *The Word of Life* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1989), 461.

<sup>27</sup> "It is generally agreed among Biblical scholars that neither the fall nor the conditions that ensued from it during the time of the old covenant may be considered as normative for the life of the new community. The purpose of Christ's redemptive ministry was to redress the disruption that had been brought about by the fall and to restore the integrity of God's creational purpose." Bilezikian, "Hierarchist and Egalitarian Enculturations," 422.

George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, rev. ed., ed. Donald A. Hagner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 113. Thompson argues that we should extend our hermeneutic beyond individual passages to follow the trajectory of biblical revelation on an issue (337). He believes the trajectory of both Old and New Testaments is in the direction of the "full and equal partnership" of men and women (338). He further suggests that we extend the hermeneutical trajectory beyond the canon itself to the history of interpretation, as the church struggled to apply scripture to such issues as uncircumcision and abolition (339-349). Keener argues similarly that we must use the same hermeneutic in the passages about wives' submission as we use in the passages about slaves' submission (184-224).

Grenz and Kjesbo, 150.

Grenz and Kjesbo, 175.

For a discussion of functional subordination in the Trinity, see Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 363, 751.

Philip Schaff, ed., *The Creeds of Christendom*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., revised by David S. Schaff (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996, 2:68.

For the second and third points, see Groothuis, 43-44, 56-59. She comments: "Regardless of how hierarchalists try to explain the situation, the idea that women are equal *in* their being, yet not equal *by virtue of* their being, is contradictory and ultimately nonsensical" (55). In chapter two of her book, Groothuis has thoroughly analyzed and refuted the "equal in essence, different in function" argument.

Nicholas Wolterstorff, "Hearing the Cry," in *Women, Authority & the Bible*, ed. Alvera McKelless (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 290. Wolterstorff observes that those who deny women equal participation in the church today must do so "by making God appear arbitrarily arbitrary," in that he denies women the use of the gifts he has given them in equal measure to men.

Gilbert Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles: What the Bible Says About a Woman's Place in Church and Family*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), 69; and Groothuis, 107. Grenz and Kjesbo point out that those who use the maleness of Old Testament priests as an argument against women in ministry ignore the many other requirements for priests in the Old Testament (middle class, Aaronic descent, physical perfection, marriage to a virgin, being ceremonially clean) as not relevant today (181).

## A Biblical Theology of Women in Leadership

<sup>36</sup> For the distinction between representative and representation, see Mary Hayter, *The New in Christ: The Use and Abuse of the Bible in the Debate about Women in the Church* (Ottawa: Eerdmans, 1987), 52, 56.



**Israel and her History**

by Ronald Youngblood\*

Bright, A *History of Israel*, 4th ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000. xi + 533 pp. + 16 maps, paperback, \$34.95.

J. Hoerth, *Archaeology and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988. 447 pp., hardback, \$44.99 .

Albright, C. Kaiser, Jr., *A History of Israel From the Bronze Age Through The Jewish Wars*. Louisville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998. xx + 540 pp., hardcover, \$34.99.

Nielsen, Peter Lemche, *The Israelites in History and Tradition*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998. ix + 246 pp., hardback, \$29.95.

The four books here under review deal, each in its own way, with the task of attempting to determine how, when and why the Old Testament historiographers went about writing their work. What were the writers of the Old Testament trying to accomplish in terms of the history they recorded? During what time span did they write—or dictate? Did the events they chronicled reflect their own time, or the time of the presumably past events they were writing about? And does any of this really matter?

Let me begin by briefly analyzing Lemche's volume, the title of which was perhaps inspired by that of John Van Seters' notorious work on the patriarchs, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975).. Niels Peter Lemche, professor at the Institute for Biblical Exegesis at the University of Copenhagen, is a prominent member of the so-called minimalist (also labeled "revisionist" or "nihilist") school of Old Testament scholars centered primarily in Sheffield, England, and Copenhagen, Denmark (Lemche provides a representative listing of his like-minded colleagues on p. 157). Their basic overall thesis is that the Old Testament documents were produced *in toto* during the Persian and/or Hellenistic periods (sixth to second centuries B.C.) and that the so-called "history" they record is that of the time of the writers, not that of

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the pseudohistorical/mythical people and events named in that "history" (p. 129). As exemplar of the Copenhagen school, Lemche denies the historicity of everything that occurred prior to Israel's divided monarchy, including for example the exodus (p. 23) and the period of the judges (p. 101). Indeed, exodus and exile alike are "foundation myths" which ancient Israelite "history" is simply the logical "extension" (pp. 86-97). Since the Old Testament cannot possibly be considered a primary source for the study of history (pp. 24, 29), ancient "Israel" itself is a fictional construct (pp. 96-97), "an artificial creation of the scholarly world of the modern age" (p. 163) having "little more than one thing in common with the Israel that existed once upon a time in Palestine, that is, the name" (p. 165). Lemche's aberrant pronouncements are not helped by a number of bizarre gaffs, such as referring to the books of Samuel as the books of "Solomon" (pp. 24, 13) or an evangelical Old Testament scholar and author Donald Wiseman as "Dennis" (pp. 186, 20) and, *mirabile dictu*, Ezekiel 43:15 as "Hezekiah" 43:15 (p. 182)—thus adding an oft-cited fictional work to the Old Testament canon.

Who, then, might be expected to take Niels Peter Lemche and his compatriots seriously? Far too many gullible readers, I am afraid, who have been impressed by minimalist arguments that display a patina of rigorously reasoned scholarship. It is therefore no wonder that a flood of critical books, articles and reviews has surged across the literary seascape in an attempt to swamp the Good Ship Nihilism before it can reach safe harbor. One of the most insightful volumes from an epistemological standpoint is James Barr's *History and Ideology in the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), which makes, among many other trenchant observations, the following comment: "just cannot see that anyone in the Second Temple period, inspired by ideology, would just invent all the material about Abner and Asahel and Ittai the Gittite and Paltiel the son of Laish. Elements of invention, yes, one can see in any story, but the invention of material on such a scale seems entirely unconvincing as a theory" (p. 87).

Equally significant, this time from the viewpoint of archaeology, is Bill Dever's *What Did the Biblical Writers Know, and When Did They Know It?* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001). In contrast to Lemche's oft-repeated assertion that the Old Testament must be thought of as merely a secondary historical source, Dever affirms that "texts and artifacts both must be considered 'primary data,' read similarly" (p. 88). He summarizes: "I have sought to counter the revisionists' minimalist conclusions by showing how archaeology uniquely provides a *context* for many of the narratives in the Hebrew Bible. It thus makes them not just 'stories' arising out of later Judaism's identity crisis, but part of the history of a real people of Israel in the Iron Age of ancient Palestine. As the title puts it: 'What did the biblical writers know, and when did they know it?' They knew a *lot*, and they knew it early" (p. 295).

Finally, another of Lemche's critical reviewers, who uses the argument from language: "[T]he study of historical linguistics of Northwest Semitic languages corresponds exactly to the chronology of the Biblical writings that scholars have deduced on other grounds. How could Jews of late Persian and Hellenistic times have accurately reproduced linguistic features of pre-Exilic Hebrew when these features had been dead for hundreds of years? The verbal system had changed, the sounds of certain Hebrew consonants (e.g., *ayn* [ʿ] had changed, spelling conventions had changed, the syntax of numbers had changed, and more. . . . All of these features argue against Lemche's thesis (and many more could be adduced). But he fails to address any of them" (Ronald Hendel in *BAR* 25/6 [1999] 60).

Enough, however, of Lemche's screed. I turn next to Hoerth's excellent treatment of the constantly increasing number of links between archaeological discoveries and the various Old Testament texts on which they bear. Alfred J. Hoerth recently retired as professor of archaeology at Wheaton College in Illinois, where he taught for almost three decades. As a participant in numerous archaeological excavations throughout the Middle East, he is extraordinarily well qualified to take his readers on a chronological journey through the historical narratives recorded in the Hebrew Bible, all the while noting how archaeological finds illuminate them. A few examples of the many such relationships he adduces will suffice.

A royal document addressed to Jabin was discovered at Hazor in 1992. Dating to the 18th or 17th century BC, it attests to the fact that the name is old indeed and implies that it may have been dynastic, since it occurs also in Joshua and Judges. If dynastic, it also undermines the suggestion that the mentions of Jabin in association with both Joshua and Deborah must refer to the same individual" (p. 230 n. 8). Again: According to 2 Samuel 2:23, "Abner thrust the butt of his spear into Asahel's stomach, and the spear came out through his back." Hoerth notes that "the butt end of a spear was sometimes fitted with two prongs so it could be stuck in the ground while not being carried. As Joab's brother Amasa died, the prongs could be as deadly as the spearhead on the other end" (p. 265). And finally, Hoerth appropriately rescues the only surviving pictorial representation of an ancient Israelite king on the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III with the following laconic comment: "Kyle McCarter . . . attempts to identify the figure on the Black Obelisk as Joram rather than Jehu, an identification rejected by Edwin Thiele . . . and Baruch Halpern . . . . It is also suggested that the kneeling figure is an Israelite official and not the king himself, but Assyrian reliefs depict rulers and not their subordinates doing obeisance" (p. 322).

Hoerth obviously does not shy away from debate or controversy. Although he favors the early date for the exodus, he wisely expresses the following caution:



"[A]rchaeology is not yet so precise that it can look at these two destruction levels (approximately 1400 and 1250) and prove their cause. Presently, destruction levels 'prove' either date for the exodus—and therefore they prove neither" (p. 181). With respect to the tower of Babel (Genesis 11), Hoerth goes against the consensus of commentators when he denies that the tower was a typical Mesopotamian ziggurat, a huge artificial mountain with exterior steps that led to a worship site at the top. His preference for a more common fortified tower or fortress (p. 197) is made questionable, however, when the language of Genesis 11:4 ("a tower that reaches to the heavens") is compared with that of Jacob's experience in 28:12, where he had "a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven." Jacob is clearly seeing a ziggurat, and the strikingly similar terminology in Genesis 11—among other things—has led most scholars to see a ziggurat there as well. On another matter, a minor slip is Hoerth's identification of Mordecai as Esther's "uncle" (p. 397). He was of course her cousin, as the Hebrew text of Esther 2:7 makes eminently clear. But Hoerth's fine book is remarkably free of such mistakes. I could only wish that the word "history" appeared somewhere in its title, because Hoerth's subject matter is as much about history as it is about archaeology.

Walt Kaiser's volume on the history of Israel is the author's attempt to produce a conservative textbook on the subject at hand. As such it is faithful to the Old Testament narratives and takes them at face value, declaring that they speak the truth when properly interpreted and understood. It is thus an admirable work overall and constitutes yet another useful contribution to Old Testament studies from the prolific pen of the highly respected scholar, teacher and lecturer who is currently the Colman M. Mockler Distinguished Professor of Old Testament and President of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Massachusetts.

Kaiser's strengths here, as elsewhere in his other works, are self-evident. His bibliographies are extensive and up to date at the time of writing. He has the unusual facility of summarizing large and/or complex bodies of material in brief and articulate compass (cf., e.g., pp. 354-355; 359; 382; 394; 414-416). His championing of Kenneth Kitchen's *tour de force* on the early dating of the patriarchal narratives is right on target (p. 63), as is his defense of Edwin R. Thiele's chronological framework for the divided kingdom (p. 293). And Walt has slowly won me over to his interpretation of the enigmatic phrase *torat ha'adam* in 2 Samuel 7:19: "law/charter for humanity" (p. 266).

The book reads well, as one might rightly expect from a master teacher/lecturer. Indeed, it reads as though it were typed directly from lecture notes—which, if true, goes a long way toward explaining both its strengths and its weaknesses. Colloquial expressions are used freely and often. Among a host of others we find "some sort of razzle-dazzle story," "he would be on the outs," "here was one character who had to be dealt with



ing Joab out to be the bad guy"—and all four of these on one page (262). I chuckled at any of these, as I would have if I had been in a lecture hall. But it seems to me that it is legitimate to question whether such oral language is appropriate in a serious written treatment of Israel's history, which is surely what Kaiser intends his book to be.

Unfortunately, the volume underwent only superficial editing and proofreading. The name of Amenemhet I is spelled in three different ways in a single paragraph (p. 53). Dever is declared to be dead (p. 146), even though I spoke with him recently—and in person, not at a seance. Og is said to be "one of the last of the doloments, a race of giants" (p. 41 n. 22), but the closest word to the reputed "dolomen" that I could find is "dolmen," defined correctly as "a megalithic structure, a stone chamber created by the erection of two or more massive vertical 'wall' stones roofed by one or more equally massive 'roof' stones" (D II.20). Gideon's other name is given as "Jerub-Babel" (p. 192). Archaeologist Shimon Kochavi is called "Moshekoachav" (p. 246 n. 6), a slip that is incredibly, if dutifully, repeated in the author index (p. 516). Back to the Black Obelisk for a moment, Kaiser claims that the Israelite king depicted on it is Ahab (p. 346). And these examples are just the tip of the iceberg. Surely the publishers should have accorded better treatment to a book of this importance! Sad to say, however, the author himself is partly to blame for his errors, as he himself admits (p. xiii).

But when all is said and done, at the end of the day I would recommend Kaiser's history to those who are looking for a competent paraphrase of the Old Testament historical narratives that interacts with modern scholarship both critically and respectfully. I find myself resonating with the way in which Carl G. Rasmussen, one of Walt's former students, writes in the conclusion of his own measured review: "For me the methodology and content of Kaiser's book has a familiar feel to it, and I think it will find a welcome home among evangelicals" (*JETS* 42/4 [1999] 699).

Although the final volume, *A History of Israel*, has the same title as and a similar format to that of Kaiser, its perspective is quite different. Its author, John Bright, was a fully committed Christian with great respect for the meaning and message of the Old Testament. At the same time, however, he adopted a "modified historical-critical approach to the Bible," as Kaiser well describes it (p. 10). Bright was therefore not overly concerned to defend every detail in the biblical text. It must be emphasized, however, that he was convinced of the overall historicity of the Old Testament narratives as far as the big picture concerned. In 1940 he was appointed to the Cyrus H. McCormick Chair of Hebrew and Old Testament Interpretation at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, a position he held until his retirement in 1975. He died on March 26, 1995, in Richmond.

The staying power of Bright's *History* is demonstrated by the fact that the first edition, published in 1959, underwent two major revisions, each of which took into

consideration and incorporated new information—exegetical, philological, archaeological, methodological—that had come to light in the interim. Like his mentor, William Foxwell Albright, John Bright cheerfully changed his viewpoint if and when the evidence dictated. The end result is that by the time the third edition of the *History* appeared, Bright's mature reflections in that volume had propelled it to the undisputed forefront of the genre. I remember sitting in a seminar room where Albright was discussing the history of Israel and praising Bright's treatment of it. Among other things, Albright said that "if truth be told, Martin Noth's *The History of Israel* and John Bright's *A History of Israel* should exchange their titles!"

For all of his skepticism, Bright fought valiantly for one traditional view against another. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were "actual historical individuals" (p. 92)—a far cry indeed from the opinions of the minimalists, who banish the patriarchs to the realm of myth. The existence of David and Solomon is simply taken for granted by Bright. As his friend and colleague William P. Brown puts it, Bright "would have, no doubt, felt heartened to know that a recently discovered ninth-century Aramaic stela fragment from Tel Dan makes an apparent reference to the 'House of David' " (p. 479). And as far as Moses is concerned, Bright has this to say: "The events of exodus and Sinai require a great personality behind them. And a faith as unique as Israel's demands a founder as surely as does Christianity—Islam, for that matter. To deny that role to Moses would force us to posit another person with the same name!" (p. 127).

Bright's control of the bibliography in his chosen field is formidable. But for many, including myself, his greatest strength is the comprehensiveness of his treatment and his attention to the smallest details. The latter, however, though impressive, sometimes got Bright into trouble—especially when he chose the least likely option for a debatable point. His excursus on the date of Ezra's mission to Jerusalem, for example, tended to expand the years went by. Nehemiah arrived before Ezra, said Bright—a position he maintained to the very end, in spite of a penetrating article by Frank Moore Cross defending the traditional order (pp. 391-402). His other major excursus, this time concerning the problem of the number of Sennacherib's campaigns in the days of Hezekiah (one—or two?), defended the two-campaign theory (pp. 298-309). Kaiser (p. 381 n. 14) opts for one, as does Hoerig (p. 351 n. 10). Lemche seems not to have been particularly interested in the question, believing as he does that "the biblical version of the campaign [singular, to be sure] is placed within a network of legendary motives" (p. 26).

Two surprising omissions in Bright's work are the absence of any mention of Ruth or Esther as historical figures (although he does make reference here and there to the book of Esther). Typographical errors are virtually nonexistent—not so amazing, given that the book went through several editions (selling well over 100,000 copies in all) and was

therefore examined microscopically by many pairs of eyes. Mistakes of fact are likewise made: Bright makes reference to "the Hittite treaties of the first millennium" (p. 154), which of course should be "the second millennium." And Bright demonstrates himself to be a true adherent of the Albright school in his promotion of the highly unlikely idea that the divine name Yahweh "is a causative form of the verb 'to be' " and therefore means something like "he creates/brings into being" (pp. 157-158).

Despite its flaws, however, Bright's *History* seems destined to continue to hold a favored place among the other representatives of its genre. Lemche, as might be expected, damns Bright's work, only reluctantly giving it a modicum of faint praise (pp. 141-145). But Brown, Professor of Old Testament at Union Theological Seminary and author of an introduction and appendix to Bright's fourth edition, well sums up Bright's legacy in one crisp paragraph worthy of Bright himself (p. 1): "The facility with which Bright engaged scripture, archaeology, and ancient Near Eastern history remains unsurpassed within the genre. Bright's critical confidence in the historical texture of biblical tradition made his work useful not only for the study of ancient history but also for the study of Old Testament literature. Most significantly, Bright took seriously Israel's theological formation; he regarded Israel's faith as a determinative factor in shaping its identity in history. Bright's focus on Israel's faith, more broadly, indicated his conviction that history constitutes the arena of revelation and theology. Finally, Bright's lively writing style makes for stimulating reading."

But it seems fitting that Bright himself should be given the last word, a word that has become classic and that every true believer can say "Amen" to: "Old Testament history ultimately places one before a decisive question . . . : 'Who do you say that I am?' It is a question that only faith's affirmation can answer. But all who read Israel's history are confronted with it whether they know it or not, and do give answer . . . one way or another. The Christian . . . must reply: 'Thou art the Christ [Messiah], the Son of the living God.' After he has said that—if he knows what he has said—Old Testament history assumes for him a new meaning as part of a redemptive drama leading on to its conclusion in Christ. In Christ, and because of Christ, the Christian sees its history, which is 'salvation history' (*Heilsgeschichte*), but yet also a history of disappointment and failure, made really and finally *Heilsgeschichte*."





**Studies on Psalms: A Review Article**

By Richard E. Allison\*

C. Broyles, *Psalms*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999, 539 pp., paperback.

Russell Bullock, *Encountering the Book of Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2001, 266 pp., hardback, \$24.99

L. Crenshaw, *The Psalms: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001, 187 pp., paperback.

Robert Davidson, *The Vitality of Worship: A Commentary on the Book of Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998, 484 pp., paperback, \$35.00.

L. Mays, *Psalms*. Louisville: John Knox, 1994, 457 pp., hardback, \$34.95.

Gene H. Peterson, *Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989, 151 pp., paperback, \$10.00.

Craig C. Broyles, Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University in Canada, views the Psalms as originally written for use in liturgy. "A Psalm was originally designed as liturgy and not a chapter in a book." Their function is to help the people of God in worship.

The "Table of Contents" lists the psalms in numerical order as they appear in the NIV and supplies a title for each by the author. The "Introduction" of some 41 pages contains a number of interesting features. The psalm is defined. Then the various genres are introduced: Temple Entry Liturgies, Hymns (in their many varieties), Royal Psalms, Wisdom and Torah Psalms. In addition, OT traditions, David and the Psalms and a very interesting treatment of spirituality and the psalms receive consideration. The work concludes with a Subject Index and a Scripture Index.

Broyles makes a careful section by section exposition of each Psalm in this volume of the New International Commentary series. Key terms and phrases are highlighted. Extensive footnotes follow each chapter and contain helpful textual and

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technical information. Utilizing the latest scholarship, the author has produced a friendly commentary and the Psalms for the general reader and the serious student.

C. Hassel Bullock, the Franklin Dryness Professor of Biblical Studies at Wheaton College, has authored a comprehensive tome to introduce readers to the elements of interpreting the Psalms. This work is one part in a series by Baker Academic entitled *Encountering Biblical Studies*.

The author deals in three parts with many of the various dimensions found in the Psalms such as: literary and hermeneutical, literary and theological and use of Psalms in worship. In Part I, Bullock treats: name of the book, nature of the book, place in the canon, title, superscriptions, musical and literary notations, instrumental types of poetry and structure. Interpretation is viewed through the psalmists, the editors and the viewers experience followed by six rules for interpreting the Psalms.

In Part II, the author portrays historically the manner in which the Psalms have been utilized in preincarnational revelation, the Qumran Scrolls, the New Testament temple worship, synagogue worship, Christian worship and meditation.

In Part III, a major portion of the work, the author develops the various themes in the Psalms. These include: praise, lament, thanksgiving, trust, royalty, reign of God, Lord, wisdom, penitence, torah and imprecation. Each of these categories is identified, defined and illustrated.

This work is obviously not a commentary but resembles an encyclopedia disclosing to the serious student all they ever wanted to know about the Psalms. The work is impressively researched with obvious dependence on a comprehensive knowledge of many great scholarly works on Psalms. Included are five pages of footnotes, four pages of bibliography, four pages of glossary and ten pages of scriptural indices. In addition there is a liberal use of illustrations, sidebars, exegetical explorations, chapter outlines, objectives and study questions for each chapter.

The erudite, James L. Crenshaw, Robert Flowers Professor of Old Testament at Duke University, in his work *The Psalms: An Introduction*, takes one on a major journey through a menagerie of views on the Psalms, their composition and transmission. Part I relates an exploration of the scope of Psalms considering: Psalms of David, Asaph, Korahites, Moses, Solomon, Ethan, Psalms of Ascent and Hallel Psalms. These are then related to Psalms outside the Psalter such as: other parts of biblical text, the Apocrypha, Qumran, and additional Psalms of David and Solomon. Part II considers various approaches to Psalms such as: Jewish interpretation, Christian prayers, reflection on human nature, cursing of enemies, metaphors handbook for religious life, source for historical data, classification of types and artistic descriptions. These illustrate the various approaches to interpreting the Psalms. Part III focuses

author's method for interpreting and engaging the text of Psalms. This he illustrates in extended treatment of four very different Psalms: 73, 115, 71, 24. His approach throughout is an attempt to get others to "appreciate the literary artistry and logical sensitivity of the ancient poets."

One of the most insightful commentaries on the book of Psalms is entitled, *The City of Worship*, by Robert Davidson. The title is a bit misleading. The subtitle is accurate, *A Commentary On the Book of Psalms*.

The introduction is short and limited to three topics: "The History of Interpretation," "The Poetry of Worship" and "The Book." The commentary develops the characteristic five book arrangement of the Psalter. Each section opens with a short, succinct introduction followed by penetrating commentary on each and every one of the Psalms. A four page selected bibliography concludes the work.

The highlight of the book is the insightful commentary. Each Psalm in essence is meticulously treated and succinctly developed. The meanings of important new words are illuminated with precision. Cultural idioms are explained. While logical in approach, it spans the gap between scholarly and devotional use of the Psalms. It has appeal and utility for scholars, teachers, worship leaders, pastors, students and devotional readers of the Psalms.

"Interpretation, A Bible Commentary For Teaching and Preaching," has a very excellent commentary entitled *Psalms*, by James L. Mays. The series is published by Knox Press. *Psalms* is one of the thirty-five volumes available. The general editor is James L. Mays, the author of this volume. His skill with Hebrew, the culture and theology are exceptional. The intended audience is teachers and preachers in the church. Dr. Mays is Professor Emeritus of Hebrew and Old Testament Interpretation at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia.

The underlying assumption of the work is that Psalms were originally composed for worship. This theme guides the commentary throughout. The Psalms in the Bible are treated in a descriptive fashion usually containing a concise outline at some point in the exposition. The Psalms receiving the greater consideration deal with those prominent in worship, those referred to most in the New Testament and those that have been most important to the church down through history.

The "introduction" is extensive treating such topics as: importance, anatomy, history, types and theology. The work concludes with a four page bibliography. The pages of commentary on the 150 psalms is devotional, theological, exegetical and practical. It is to be recommended for personal devotions, study or preparation for preaching or preaching.

## Studies on Psalms: A Review Article

The Psalms are tools for prayer asserts Eugene Peterson in his work entitled *The Answering God*. The author states that Psalms one and two are introductory. The first directs one to the practice of Torah meditation. The second develops expectation for Messiah in a world where intimidation by unbelieving rulers is rampant. Prayer begins with the third Psalm and continues through the remainder. The Psalms run the gamut of human experience. They move from chaos to form. The tendency of humans is to be more spiritual than God. The Psalms call us to get real. Praying Psalms out loud assists us in "entering things as they are... Evil is encountered, wickedness is confronted." The scandal Psalm, 137, comes out of Israel's painful experience and humiliation. It ends with a double "blessedness," for those given to meditation and listening. The hatred is assuaged by praying it out and then remembering faithfulness, the justice, and the presence of God. Prayer does not legitimize hate, it uses it. The Psalms focus on life and are called forth by the experiences of living. Categorization of the Psalms should be left to the scholars. The author says, "We do better to enter the sequence of the Psalms... learning to enter what comes... practicing the presence of God."



## REVIEWS

*NIV Study Bible Library* on CD-ROM (32-bit edition, version 2.6). Published by Zondervan Interactive ([www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com)). Includes 1 CD-ROM and a Reference Software User's Guide over a hundred pages. \$129.97.

This piece of silicon magic contains a virtual treasure trove of reference material that would take up far too much shelf space in my study were I to buy each volume separately. On CD, you get the complete text of the New International Version (including footnotes), an authorized Greek New Testament, the King James Version, the New American Standard Bible, NIV Study Bible notes, the NIV Bible Dictionary, Captions of Maps and Cities, Nave's Concise Bible, the Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties, the Expository Dictionary, the NIV Bible Commentary, the New Revised Standard Version (including footnotes), some "Inspirational Readings" (Bible passages for particular feelings and occasions), and a section of verse notes for the user to create. It will link to your word processor if you ask it nicely. On top of all this, there is an Atlas with exceptional browse features (though toggling back and forth between them is a bit challenging). As if that were not enough, also included with this CD is the STEP reader, which is a tremendous search tool, and is used quite commonly among different kinds of Bible study software.

The program begins with four windows for the NIV, NIV Bible Commentary, Nave's Concise Bible, and the NIV Bible Dictionary, though it can be set up to open any of the supplied programs. Within these windows are numerous text links, and each window knows what the user is doing – e.g., when you are scrolling through the NIV Bible Commentary, the NIV text window changes verses as you scroll through the commentary. I loaded it onto both my home computer (an ancient Pentium 133) and my office computer (a still-rather-long-in-the-tooth Pentium II 433). Loading time only varied by a minute, as even the slower computer took only a few minutes to do a "typical installation", which included all books, the Atlas and the STEP reader. This allows one to use most of the programs without needing to put the CD-ROM into the drive every time. The exception, I found, was the STEP reader, which requires the CD to be inserted with each use.

I happen to own the Expositors' Bible Commentary on CD-ROM, also produced by Zondervan Interactive, which uses exactly the same interface. What I found puzzling was that I did not make the two programs talk to each other. It had been installed well before the NIV Study Bible Library, with typical installation; I would have thought that the new program would

## Reviews

have recognized the previously-installed one, and set things up so that the two could interact. alas, I must open yet another program to do that!

This program comes with a sixty-day money-back guarantee, and claims to run v Windows 3.1 or Windows 95. I run it at home with Windows 95 and at the office with Windows 98, with no differences. It requires a Windows-supported video card and printer, and a minimum of 4 MB of hard disk space. A complete installation will require 45 MB.

The User's Guide is set up in different sections in a user-friendly manner. As v most computer programs, however, I found I caught on more quickly to the various features of the program just by fiddling around and using it. I would recommend this software investment for students, pastors, scholars, and perhaps especially those who are leading small groups Bible study.

Jeffrey F. Lo

*Scholar's Library*, Logos Bible Software Series X. Libronix Digital Library System 1.0d. Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1313 Commercial Street, Bellingham, WA 98225-4372. 6 disks, 2001, \$599.95.

The Logos products have been reviewed here previously (ATJ 28 [1996] 116–120). This completely new technology deserves a new review. It is now called the Libronix Digital Library System and can act as an upgrade for Logos Library System users. To run the product is necessary to have the following: Pentium 133 MHz or faster processor, CD-ROM drive, Windows 98 or higher (it will run on Windows 98/Me/NT 4.0 [SP3]/2000/XP), 64 MB memory, a minimum of 60MB of hard drive space, and an 800x600 or higher screen.

Installation is straightforward, with a self-loading system on the installation disk. It is possible through the 'Location Manager' to make the file resident on the computer hard-drive, not needing to run off the CD's. There are 232 titles available in the package, according to Logos company, including over a dozen English Bibles, several Bible dictionaries (e.g. *NBD*, *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, *Concise Bible Dictionary*, *Logos Bible Dictionary*), several commentaries (including the *New Bible Commentary*, *Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, and the *IVP Bible Background Commentary*), several foreign language texts (Greek, Hebrew, Latin) and too many other resources for pastors and students to be able to list here. A complete description can be found at <http://www.logos.com/scholars>. A difficulty, which I, and others I am aware of, had in loading the package was in the fonts for foreign languages, which did not install correctly. Technical support was able to show how the correct settings could be made, but it was an annoying circumstance when first trying the new system out.

The new look of the package includes opening up what looks like a web home page. This can be modified for each person's individual preferences. One section is for Bible study, where you can enter a passage and choose how to look at the text, as a Bible verse alone, in 'passage guide' mode, which brings up all available commentaries, cross-references and topics; the 'exegetical guide' mode, where each Hebrew or Greek term behind the text is morphologically described and active links are provided to each of the available lexicons and grammars where the term is discussed; the 'word study guide' mode in which each word is translated, the Strong's number is given, and active links to word study tools such as

orishman's concordance, Strong's itself, and theological word books are provided; or the Bible and commentary' mode, in which the verse in a selected translation and a selected commentary on that verse are shown in separate windows. All this makes the product very useful the first time it is accessed.

Other useful features have also been added. For example, under the pull-down 'Tools' menu, 'Bible tools' one can chose to open the verse under consideration in any or all available version so as to make a comparison between them. Using the same steps one can open up the 'word study guide' noted above from whatever verse is on the screen, or pull up the verse in several versions with a color coded comparison between the selected base text and other versions of the verse. The 'Exegetical guide' is accessible in the same way.

If you need a bibliography for the research being done, pulling down the 'Systems' menu enables one to be generated following several different style options, including MLA, Turabian, Chicago Manual of Style, and SBL. Numerous other features are available, and can be explored by using the pull-down 'Help' menu.

There are several ways in which the material available through the Libronix system can be purchased. One may buy an individual work for downloading through the company website. There are also several packages with software thought to be appropriate for different groups bundled together. This is considerably cheaper than buying each item as a separate unit. For example, the Scholars' Library is said to be 'worth over \$5,000.00 in equivalent print editions.' There are also numerous other publishers who are using the Libronix platform to produce their own electronic material. That means that one can seamlessly access all the material available on your machine with this one system. There are numerous other platforms that are not compatible, however.

Two matters of concern need to be raised, one minor and one major. The former is that the company's conservative theological viewpoint is clear from much of the material which they make available. For example, much of the material is from a dispensational background, and Dallas Seminary is very well represented among the titles made available in the various packages. There are works from many other viewpoints also, so one just needs to be aware of what one uses as a resource, and use it critically.

A second, much more serious concern is over the numerous bugs in the version which I used. I was using the tools to work on a commentary on Joel and Malachi, so needed it for fairly sophisticated word studies and word searches in English and in the original languages. Here it is very frustrating, and would not be recommended until some of the problems can be ironed out. One of the most frustrating aspects was doing word searches from the Hebrew text. The system has a very useful search mechanism using the right mouse button. When the cursor is placed on a word and the right button is clicked, one can do a number of things, including displaying morphological information concerning the chosen word (i.e. the Hebrew word chosen, its transcription as, for example, verb, qal, infinitive construct, Hebrew root, and dictionary form). One can left click on the Hebrew root and be taken immediately to the BDB entry for the root, which is very helpful.

Another option from the right button is to work with the selected text, either in the form it is found in the verse being studied, or in its root form. Each of these can be studied by doing a word search in the Bible version being used or in all available versions, or it can be looked up



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automatically in any of the available lexical. All this is very helpful, but it is not trustworthy. For example, if one is studying Isa 35:1 and wants to look up all the uses of the Hebrew term *midbar*, the procedure is followed as outlined above, and the program says that the term occurs 337 times in the Old Testament. All well and good, until one checks other resources and finds out that in fact the word only occurs 271 times. What the program does is search for all words with consonants *mdbr*, which also are these for the participle *medaber*, 'one who speaks'. This is something that occurs where there are important differences in other diacritical marks, e.g. the difference between '*shin*' and '*sin*' is not discerned, meaning that when one searches for 'fields', one also finds 'breasts'. In other words, a sophisticated tool has not had its sophistication carried through to the deeper levels where it can be most critical.

When doing a word search, a separate window lists all the verses in which the word occurs, or at least the first verse in each chapter in which it is found, with a number in parentheses apparently indicating how many times total the word is found in the chapter. Each occurrence of the word searched in the text is highlighted blue, so they can be easily found when one searches through the text. If searching for *midbar* in Exodus, for example, the first occurrence in the book (3:1) is neither recorded in the generated list nor is it highlighted. Also Exodus 19 is said to have 5 occurrences of the word, when in reality there are only 3.

There is also an annoying lack of precision in the links provided. For example, when one tried to look up the verb *zā'aq* used in Joel 1:14 in BDB, the link was to the Aramaic section of the dictionary rather than the Hebrew. Even more frustrating when working on Joel commentary was to have the links which are helpfully provided from the dictionaries like BDB to the biblical texts cited in the dictionary entry take me to the wrong place. Joel 1:1 takes one to John, not Joel. While John is much more frequently referred to by that abbreviation than is Joel, the link to John in a Hebrew dictionary is patently wrong.

Another helpful feature, if it worked accurately, is the ability to perform morphological searches. For example it is possible to request a search for every second person feminine singular Hebrew verb that occurs in the Minor Prophets. This is quickly accomplished, showing the search results as a list of verbs that meets the criteria as being the first verb in Joel 2:21 (a second feminine singular preterite form), missing the fact that the second and third verbs in that verse also meet these criteria (being second feminine singular imperatives).

Sometimes there are problems caused by lack of proofing the material. The Hebrew term 'oracle' (*n'm*) has as one of its references in Libronix's BDB as Ob 4:8 (which does not exist), rather than to Ob 4, 8 (since Obadiah has only one chapter). Also the entry for *nāwā* (BDB 627) is misspelled *nāreh*, and the entry for the very important Hebrew verb *yshb* 'to sit' has its first meaning numbered '3' rather than '1', and it continues the erroneous numbering throughout the article. Finally, though there are undoubtedly numerous other examples, in the Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains, Hebrew, the words for 'desert land' and 'Zion' respectively (numbers 7481 and 7482) are written as beginning with the final form of the letter *tsade* rather than the non-final form.

One final point concerns those passages where the Hebrew and English verse and chapter numbers do not correspond. This is usually caught by the Libronix system, so going to Joel 4:19 in the Hebrew text will take you to the corresponding 3:19 in the NIV. The problem comes when you want to look at all the versions of the verse. When starting from the NIV



all the various versions are duly listed. When the Hebrew text is the base text, however, no other versions are called up for 4:19, since English versions have the chapter number reversed here. It appears that an additional line or two of code would be able to fix this.

All told, it is difficult to know how to review the product. It is well conceived, asking end-users might most benefit from what computers can do with the least amount of work on their part. While the conception is excellent, the execution is not. It seems that the earlier Logos versions worked with fewer bugs, though I must admit I gave this version a harder workout than I did with earlier versions. Until the kinks are worked out, I would urge those who have earlier versions to keep using them, and new buyers to hold their purchases until a new release fixes the problems that there are with the product. The company is constantly updating and improving its products, with a new version most probably out before this review is printed. Naturally, every theological library as well as pastors and students of scripture will want to have at least one of the Libronix library packages, but the time does not appear to be yet.

David W. Baker

John H. Manser, Alister E. McGrath, J.I. Packer, Donald J. Wiseman, J. Gordon McConville, Stephen H. Travis, eds., *Zondervan Dictionary of Bible Themes*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999. 1232 pp., hardcover, US\$39.99; CDN\$57.99.

The subtitle of this volume is "An Accessible and Comprehensive Tool For Topical Studies" – and that it is! As I have engaged my congregation in topical studies and preaching sermons, this reference book has proven a helpful tool. Many key themes of Scripture are found in this book. It is arranged somewhat like the *Thompson Chain Reference Bible*, with numerical references, headings and sub-headings, the various Scripture passages that relate to the topic, and lists of other themes that relate to the one being examined.

The themes are organized along the lines of a systematic theology, ranging from God to the last things. Sub-categories delineate the various qualities or themes, e.g. "Jesus, the Christ" and "Jesus Christ, mind of". An alphabetical list of themes, with reference numbers, is found at the beginning of the book. About half of the book is taken up with the numerically-indexed Bible themes, while the other half is a Scripture index, providing a most helpful list of verses by book, chapter and verse of Scripture. So, for example, if you were going to lead a study on Kings 18:16ff, about Elijah and the prophets of Baal, you could look up that passage in the Scripture index and find all kinds of themes that relate to that text. If you wanted to study verse 18:16, you could check the theme of "criticism, against believers", which could then be cross-referenced back to the themes index. Many Old and New Testament examples are cited of persons who were criticized. Along with more than twenty biblical references, this category is cross-referenced to three additional categories: "Christ, opposition to", "persecution", and "Judgment, God's". This book provides a great treasure of helpful tools for study and sermon preparation.

Were I to dare to complain about the book at all, it would be about the size of the print. The liberal use of boldface type, italics, and a variation between serif and sans serif fonts aid in the legibility of the text, the print is still quite small. However, were it to be made any larger, the

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book may be so unmanageably heavy as to cut down sales, if not cause personal injury to those seeking to handle it.

The editors are thoroughly committed to the value of Scripture for the growth of Christian faith. They remind us in the introduction that it is important "that readers of Scripture are given every means of help so that they may get as much benefit and enjoyment as possible out of reading the Bible." This reference book goes a long way toward helping Christians at every stage of maturity to benefit from and enjoy the reading and study of the Bible.

Jeffrey Loach, Windsor, Ontario

Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, Tremper Longman III, eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998. 1058 pp., hardcover, \$45.00.

The *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery (DBI)* is a one volume reference work with a different approach. Rather than focus on concrete who, what or where type issues as most references do, this guide focuses more on defining, and explaining images, archetypes and metaphors. It is a valuable complement to the traditional Bible dictionary, but not a replacement for it. Perhaps the best way to describe this dictionary is to compare it with a more traditional Bible dictionary and how they each deal with some sample subject entries.

The subject of 'Bread' is a good one for comparison. The entry in *DBI* is as follows: a short paragraph of bread as a staple, followed by subheadings on the following topics: "Bread as Gift", "Eschatological Bread", "Lord's Prayer", "Bread as Metaphor", "Summary" and a list of references to related items covered in the dictionary: "Abundance, Eating, Food, Gratitude, Hospitality, Manna, Supper, Table, Wheat" for the reader to pursue related subjects of interest. The *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE)* takes a very different approach to an entry on the subject of bread. The *ISBE* entry is naturally longer as would be expected in a multi-volume work. The subsections are: "Antiquity of Bread making", "Prominence in Diet", "Ingredients", "Bread-Making", and "Eating Bread". In the "Eating Bread" issues of symbolic significance are only briefly dealt with. Notice the *ISBE* details 'what and 'how type issues: what is bread, what is made from, what are its origins, how is made, how is it consumed, why it is an important staple. The *DBI* directs the reader more to questions of meaning and significance, and in this regard *DBI* really shines. The topic of idols and idolatry is another one where *DBI* is helpful. The typical Bible dictionary will define and describe idols and idolatry, but not provide much insight to their significance. The *DBI* has a very nice and helpful entry on the subject ranging from "Idols as Deceit" and "Idolatry as Actions" to "Idols as Spirit Habitations" giving the reader much more rounded perspective on the subject of idols and their significance in the minds of various biblical authors in both Testaments.

A conventional Bible dictionary will provide a nice summary of essential facts on a topic, while *DBI* will provide added insight into usage that is of particular help in understanding the depth of thought of some biblical imagery. *DBI* entries are particularly helpful in giving the reader more "preachable" insight, but the insight doesn't stop there. It can give the diligent reader of scripture more appreciation for some of the multifaceted aspects of scripture.

ers from traditional Bible dictionaries even in biographical entries. The entry on David focuses on his character and how biblical authors portray him and his legacy. The typical Bible dictionary entry will summarize his genealogy, early career, reign and administration ending with a few brief comments about his character. If a student is simply looking for information on "David" and only wants to know where it is, how big it was, when it was destroyed and so on, the standard Bible dictionary remains the proper choice. If a student wants some help in understanding the role of a character in biblical literature, the significance of idolatry, the meaning of metaphorical uses of the word 'bread' then *DBI* is the place to go.

In summary a review of several other entries on other subjects demonstrates the value of this fine work to the serious student. If there is any weakness it is that the author of each article is not credited and precious few entries have any bibliography as do most entries in the other Bible dictionaries. It is a very helpful, usable and worthwhile addition to any library. The editors are to be commended for their efforts and the strength of their approach.

Christopher Coles

Richard N. Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1985. 239 pp.

Even though it represents a face of scholarship that is now a full twenty years old, this dictionary of the technical terms, major figures, bodies of ancient literature, and methodologies that one encounters as one enters the critical study of the Bible remains a useful companion for the beginning student. An updated edition would be even more welcome.

David A. deSilva

Stephen S. Chapman, *The Law and the Prophets: A Study in Old Testament Canon Formation*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000. xvii + 356 pp., hardcover, 178 DM.

Canon is an interesting problem since by definition it is outside of the text or corpus being discussed; it is a metatextual problem. There are elements of evidence within the corpus itself, but other evidence from outside must also be brought into the equation. In this revised Yale dissertation done under Christopher Seitz, Chapman looks specifically at the relationship between the two canonical sections, the law and the prophets within the process of canonization. He analyzes the traditional understanding that the law was primary, and that prophecy is in fact 'secondary' on it.

Chapman starts by surveying the discussions on canon since H. E. Ryle formulated the 'Standard Theory' that there is a tripartite division of law, prophets, and writings which evidenced a three-stage history of development. This nineteenth century view saw the stages taking place under Ezra for the law (5<sup>th</sup> century BC), the law in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, and the writings in the late first century AD. Other proponents of this approach included Wellhausen and Margolis, who dated the material much earlier, with the law being Mosaic.



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A development in the mid-20th century was the rise of 'canon criticism,' which Chapman sees beginning with a passing comment in O. Eissfeldt's *Introduction*, but only picked up and developed by English speakers, starting with Peter Ackroyd in 1961. Other developers of this approach, in which utterances were seen as authoritative and thus incipiently canonical even in their preliterate stage, include David Freedman, Ronald Clements, and the two main proponents, each from his own perspective- James Sanders and Brevard Childs. Subsequent discussions by such scholars as James Barr, Roger Beckwith and Norman Gottwald are analyzed.

Chapman's own view is that there is a collateral relationship between the law and the prophets, both holding equal authority, and each impacting the other in the process of canon formation. He at some length compares his view with that of Philip Davies, though not espousing his dating scheme.

Turning to the actual text, the first mine which Chapman explores are the canonical conclusions of the law (Deut 34:10-12, which theologically ties Moses with the prophets who follow) and the prophets (Mal 3:22-24 [4:4-6]), both of which show consciousness of canon. In the latter discussion he draws particularly on the work of Childs in seeing material in its current canonical context, and on those who propose the unity of the Twelve. He then looks at earlier deuteronomistic writings (Deut 31-34; Joshua), showing that there was a canon consciousness there as well. The impact of the jointly authoritative law and prophets is also shown in the various portions of the OT (Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, Zechariah 1-7; Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Daniel) have been edited. In order to support his view of the equality of law and prophets in authority and canon, Chapman critiques the arguments for the priority of the law.

This is an important, and readable work. It shows that both the law and the prophets are authoritative Scripture which are aware of and play off of each other. It is not a case of the priority of the prophets being before and the source of the law, as some critics hold. This book should be in all academic theological libraries.

David W. Baker

Donald L. Griggs, *The Bible From Scratch: The Old Testament for Beginners*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002. 135 pp., paper, \$9.95.

This is the companion study to the previously published, *The New Testament for Beginners*, also written by Donald Griggs. The preface cites adult members of congregations who were polled for topics of interest in church school classes. Seventy seven percent of those polled ranked with high interest study of 'the Bible.'

Designed for use in a classroom setting the study includes two parts. Part one is the participant's guide. Part two is the leader's guide. Griggs has long been a pioneer in Christian Education for all ages. He uses practical ideas for how this study can be taught in a seven week series using a one hour per week class along with homework. This reviewer sees how an evening class or two could be added to help with overflow discussion as well as side topics which are relevant to a particular study group.



The series is properly labeled for 'beginners.' It helps the participant learn what to do when you open the Bible. The guide asks participants to cite: 'Things I notice' as well as 'Questions I have' in reference to passages that are studied for a lesson. 'The Bible Skills and Skills Inventory' is helpful for the teacher. It is completed in the initial session and therefore gives the teacher an idea of what material needs to be covered in this Old Testament survey course.

Griggs, a Presbyterian, does not write for one denomination only. Many traditions could find this study applicable and helpful, particularly with those who are totally unfamiliar with the Old Testament.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, TX

J. Gary Millar, *Now Choose Life. Theology and Ethics in Deuteronomy*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999. 216 pp., paper, \$24.00.

*Now Choose Life* is a volume out of the *New Studies in Biblical Theology* series edited by D. A. Carson. The goal of this series is stated as "Scholarly yet entirely accessible to students, pastors, and general readers... and [providing] clear and creative insights that help thinking Christians better understand the bible and its application to contemporary life."

J. Gary Millar has accomplished that goal in this excellent look at the theology and ethics of Deuteronomy. Aside from one or two criticisms which will be noted below, Millar has achieved a cohesiveness to the book of Deuteronomy rarely found in most works.

Starting with a discussion of scholarly debates in the field of Old Testament ethics and theology, the author examines five main relationships between ethics and the text of Deuteronomy: 1) Ethics and Covenant, 2) Ethics and Journey, 3) Ethics and Law, 4) Ethics and Nations, 5) Ethics and Human Nature.

Millar argues there is no way to separate the ethics of Deuteronomy from the theology of Deuteronomy, and all of this is bound up in the Covenant relationship of God with His people. That Covenant relationship involves not only the laws but the land they are to inherit. Israel is on the verge of entering the land, and God has used both the journey and the rebellion of the people to underscore his commitment to establishing a people for himself.

The author contends that the focus on source criticism and redaction criticism in recent years has obscured the literary and theological coherence of the book. Millar focuses on the consistent theme of choice found throughout the book of Deuteronomy, seeing within the text an emphasis on Israel's past, present and future dealings with God. Horeb (and the Decalogue) and Moab (the preaching and retelling of the law by Moses) become the points of decision along the journey. Whereas an earlier generation rejected God resulting in forty years of wandering, the new generation represented at Moab is again presented with a choice to accept or reject Yahweh. Millar emphatically urges them to "Choose Life!"

One of the more interesting chapters in the book involves the question of the Deuteronomist and human nature. The author discusses this from the perspective of the expected future on the part of Israel to "choose life." The "blessings" promised for obedience to God are overshadowed by the "curses" and the subsequent "Song of Moses" which the people are required

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to learn. In the end, even strict observance of the Law will not be enough to keep Israel from returning to "Egypt" in another, future captivity, only to be restored once again to the promised land. Millar argues the final chapters of Deuteronomy look beyond the fulfillment of both blessings and the curses, to a time when God will establish a new covenant with His people which they will be able to obey His precepts.

Millar has presented his ideas in a systematic way with copious footnotes and text references, evidence of his wide reading and scholarly approach to the subject. Scholars indeed find much to appreciate, as will pastors and students. One criticism regarding presentation of the material involves the *Introduction* and the author's extensive discussion of previous scholarly works related to the topic. While the material is an excellent summation of current debate on Old Testament theology, it would seem more appropriately placed as an appendix to the book rather than an introduction. The technical nature of the discussion detracts from the overall tenor of the book as highly readable and accessible. Having noted this minor criticism, this should in no way detract from the value of the book and its contribution to the discussion of Deuteronomy. In treating the text as a whole Millar has brought back a much needed level of vitality to the study of Deuteronomy, and he has served to build a bridge between the ancient text and contemporary society and the Church. Under Millar's exposition of the Deuteronomy becomes much more than a "second giving of the Law."

Robert Gulley, Cincinnati Bible College and Seminary

John Barton, ed., *The Biblical World*. 2 vol. London/ New York: Routledge, 2002. I: xxiii + 539 pp., II: viii + 539 pp., hardcover, \$190.00.

This work describes itself as "a comprehensive guide to the contents, historical setting and social context of the Bible" (I:1). Edited by the Oriel and Lang Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture at Oxford (one of the few permanent chairs covering the Bible as a whole rather than just one of the testaments), it includes contributions by 48 scholars, some evangelists but most eschewing that identification. The volumes provide brief, introductory essays on a wide spectrum of biblical topics, each with a short bibliography. The second volume concludes with comprehensive indexes of biblical references (44 pages), modern authors (12 pages), and subjects (33 pages). The latter is especially necessary due to the wide-ranging coverage of the article.

The book is laid out in 8 parts, which are here indicated with their constituent chapters: I. The Bible- The Old Testament, Apocrypha and New Testament; II. Genres- Near Eastern myths and legends, historiography of the OT, prophecy, wisdom, apocalypticism, the Jewish novel, gospels, letters in the NT and Greco-Roman world; III. Documents- texts and versions (OT and NT), Dead Sea scrolls, Hebrew inscriptions, Cairo Geniza, Gnostic gospels, early Jewish and Christian biblical interpretation; IV. History- Biblical archaeology, Palestine during the Bronze and Iron ages, the exile, under Persia and Greece and Rome, and Israel's neighbors; V. Institutions- Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek language, warfare, the arts, law and administration in the NT period, pre-exilic through post-exilic Israelite religion, Judaism at the turn of the era, and the social and religious life of the first churches; VI. Biblical figures- patriarchs and matriarchs, Moses, David and Solomon, Jesus, and Paul; VII. Religious ideas- Jewish and Christian concepts.

vation, interpretations of Jesus' identity and role, death and afterlife, and purity; VIII. The today- Jewish and Christian Bible translation and modern biblical interpretation.

As can be seen from this list, there is a wide coverage of important biblically related material. The articles are fairly general however, and reflect the broad spectrum of theological presuppositional viewpoints. It is unclear to me who the intended audience of the book is. The material would be good for an introductory Bible course, but there is more reading than would be appropriate for most one-term courses. Also the cost would prohibit its use in that context. As a reference tool, since libraries would be the major purchasers at the price, it is too expensive for most academic institutions, though public libraries might be a clientele well served by it.

David W. Baker

en Rhea Nemet-Nejat, *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1992. [originally Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998. hardcover, \$49.95]. xxii + 346, paper, \$29.95.

The title of this volume well reflects its contents, something that cannot be said for any work. Dr Nemet-Nejat, a research affiliate at Yale, also hits her target audience of 'students and educated lay people'. Adding to its accessibility, the volume contains numerous black-and-white photographs, a map and a historical timeline of the ancient Near East, and a glossary of terms used.

In her introduction, Nemet-Nejat describes the rediscovery of ancient Mesopotamian civilization and the decipherment of its languages. She also describes how one attempts to date events in history (relative and absolute chronology), and also sets Mesopotamia in its geographical, linguistic, and historical context (from the Neolithic period to the death of Cyrus in 539 BC).

A list of chapter headings and subheadings will illustrate the breadth of information available. These include: writing, education, and literature (writing origins, education and role of scribes, archives and libraries, texts— literary and non-literary); sciences (medicine, mathematics, astronomy, technology, natural sciences, cartography and geography [a special interest of the author]); society (city life, countryside, nomads and semi-nomads, class, private houses, family structure, property and succession, role of women, fashion, food and drink); recreation; religion (mythology, development and composition, divine representations and service, places of worship, priests, religious personnel, festivals, prophets); government (king, justice, warfare, international relations); economy (farming, canals and irrigation, land management, domestic economy, foreign trade, crafts and labor). She concludes with a brief look at the legacy of the ancient world.

While not directly related to the Bible, the volume does show the environment from which Abraham came, the life of nations who subjugated Israel for generations (Assyria and Babylon), and in which Israel spent many years in exile. The volume should be in all theo-

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logical libraries, and it contains material of interest to interested lay readers, so would be appropriate in church and public libraries as well.

David W. I.

*A New English Translation of the Septuagint and Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title. The Psalms.* Translated by Albert Pietersma. Oxford and New York: Oxford University, 2000: xxvii + 149 pp., paper, \$12.99.

Oxford "teases" a hungry audience with this first instalment of an eagerly awaited English translation of the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible (including Apocrypha) that was widely used by Greek-speaking Jews across the Mediterranean, and then by the early church as well. The *NETS* project, the fruits of many years of labor on the part of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, provides the first English translation of this important ancient version since Lancelot Brenton's 1851 edition, which was based on two codices (the fourth-century Codex Vaticanus, with reference to the fifth-century Alexandrinus where Vaticanus is defective).

Students of the Bible studying the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament are often surprised to find that the wording of the quotation may differ significantly from the wording found in the Old Testament. This is because our English versions of the Old Testament are translations from the Hebrew text, whereas New Testament authors frequently rely on a reading from the Septuagint version of the Old Testament. With the publication of the *NETS*, students will have easy and reliable access to the Greek Old Testament, which will be of great value to them as they study the complexities of how the Old Testament was read and interpreted in the first Christian centuries.

Although a fresh translation from the critical edition of the Septuagint edited by Alfred Rahlfs, the *NETS* intentionally makes the NRSV its starting point to facilitate comparison between the Hebrew and Greek text traditions of the Old Testament. Since the Psalms were the most frequently used resource among New Testament authors, the *NETS* version of this significant book is worthy of separate publication and an excellent choice to introduce the larger project. Pietersma has provided a very fine translation, giving English readers easy access to the Psalms of the early church. I would merely have wished for a little more information on important variants in the Septuagint tradition, for example a note in Psalm 39:7 [Heb text: 40:6] that "eye" is replaced by "body" in the three major uncials of the Septuagint, a reading that has direct relevance for Hebrews 10:4-10. When the complete *NETS* is available, it should be considered a necessary purchase by all who search the Scriptures.

David A. deSilva



J. Richardson, *Hammurabi's Laws: Text, Translation and Glossary*. The Biblical Seminar Semitic Texts and Studies 2. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000. 423 pp., cover/paper, \$90.00/\$35.00.

The geographical area of Mesopotamia is where Abraham set out with his family to go toward the land he was promised. He left a flourishing civilization, which impacted not only him, but the wider Near Eastern environment as well through its religion, language, literature and laws, as well as its armies. It is one of its earlier law collections that is the object of this volume. The laws are significant not only in their own right, but because of the light they can throw on Hebrew laws found in the Pentateuch, a light of further understanding, but also a light of contrast.

Richardson has published an exemplary analysis which provides much grist for studying the biblical laws. He does not undertake this study himself. He does not approach it as a biblical scholar, though he has competence in that field, but rather as an Assyriologist. After a brief introduction to the text itself, and also to the layout of his book, he provides an outline of the contents of the laws, and then a transcription of them, along with the text's prolog and epilog, in Roman characters and a translation into English. These are supplemented by limited comment on text critical, linguistic and grammatical matters. Students then are well-served by a 16-page glossary of Akkadian terms, another of proper names, numerals, and units of measurement, a list of roots and stems, of verbal forms, and alphabetical English-Akkadian and Akkadian-English indexes.

While most Bible readers will find the simple translations of *ANET* or *COS* sufficient for their regular needs, this volume will be valuable for readers who need to go deeper into the meaning of the laws. The volume should be in all serious biblical studies libraries.

David W. Baker

W. M. Sasson, ed., *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. 4 volumes in 2. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2000. xxxii + 2966 pp., hardcover, \$169.95.

This mammoth undertaking is an unaltered reprint of the original publication with the same title by Scribner's in 1995, so those who already have the earlier set should not purchase this one. Those who do not, should.

The project is well-conceived and is, to my knowledge, unique in its form and content. It was originally published as a companion set to *Civilization of the Ancient Mediterranean: Greece and Rome* by Michael Grant and Rachel Kritzinger (Scribner's, 1988). It well meets the expectations set out by its title, looking at the spectrum of culture divided into 11 parts: the ancient Near East in western thought; the environment; population; social institutions; history and culture; economy and trade; technology and artistic production; religion and science; language, writing and literature; visual and performing arts; and retrospective essays. These are comprised of 189 essays by as many authors, who include experts from around the world and across the religious and theological spectrum. This is appropriate for this is a reference work in history, sociology and culture rather than in focusing on theology, though that of various societies is

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studied. It is gratifying to see several evangelical contributors included among this august group. Numerous articles are translated, from Dutch, French, German, Italian, and Russian.

The definition of the geographical area covered is generous for such a work, and includes "the core areas of Egypt, Syro-Palestine, Mesopotamia and Anatolia...the Arabian Peninsula and...Northeast Africa...Crete, Cyprus, Rhodes, Troy, Gordion, Lycia, Lydia, Caria" (xxvii). It commences its explorations at the advent of writing in the early 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, and continues through the conquest of Alexander the Great over Persia in 330 BC.

Each article is self-contained, so the volumes can be consulted topically and randomly or by the various civilizations. In order to find your way around, the first volume begins with a "Cultural Table of Contents" in which the various cultures (ancient Near East generally; and West Asia; Egypt; Mesopotamia; Anatolia, Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Arabia; Elam, Persia, Central Asia) are placed along one axis and the 11 parts mentioned above are placed along the other. The various topics discussed under each of the intersections is indicated in the grid, providing a map to the work.

To supplement the main text, line drawings, black and white photographs, maps, plates, and even excerpts from relevant texts are included, as are extensive bibliographies for each article. To help access the massive amount of material, an extensive, 148-page index of subjects, places and names is included. Thus one can explore items from abortion through marriage, witchcraft. The contributors have differing views regarding the value of various historical sources, including the Bible, some which will be quite different from those of many of the readers of this review. It is still an interesting and valuable work which should be in all academic libraries. It is also the kind of work which lay folk would like to delve into, so would be appropriate in many church and personal libraries, though the cost, which is very reasonable for such an undertaking as this, is likely to preclude the latter.

David W. Ba

Mark S. Smith, *Untold Stories: The Bible and Ugaritic Studies in the Twentieth Century*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001. xix + 252 pp., hardcover, \$29.95.

Ugaritic studies have had major impact on OT studies, even though they only commenced in 1928. In that year a site was unearthed at Minet el-Baida which, through its archaeological artifacts and epigraphic remains, has revolutionized our understanding of Canaanite, and thus Israelite, culture and also of the Hebrew language as well as the Semitic family more broadly. In this volume, Mark S. Smith, Skirball Professor of Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Studies at New York University, presents an interesting and useful study of the development of the field.

Smith lays out his material in 4 chapters, each looking at a chronological period between 1928 and 1999. Chapter One ("Beginnings: 1928 to 1945) describes the first discoveries and the textual decipherment, mentioning all of the key players and showing the parts they played. The subsequent chapters are: Two- "Synthesis and Comparisons: 1945-1970"; Three- "New Texts and Crises in Comparative Method: 1970-1985"; Four- "Resurgence in Tools and Methods: 1985-1999."

Each chapter begins with a bibliographic section entitled "Texts and Tools." An example of its contents, taken from the third chapter, includes: archaeology, new texts, translations, studies and commentaries, and synthetic studies. The bibliographies alone will make the volume valuable for students of the field. The volume also provides a useful picture of the development of the field, showing paths explored and some needing further work. There are also fascinating glimpses of the personalities involved, their cooperation and animosity, showing that scholarship is not impartial and passionless. There is also some evaluation of the usefulness of contributions made, an evaluative endeavor rare among scholars (at least in print) but useful to those who need to work their way through the abundance of material. Especially useful for most readers of this review will be the sections on the influences, whether for good or for ill, of patristic studies on biblical studies. A discussion of the contributions of Mitchell Dahood, author of the 3 volume commentary on Psalms for the influential Anchor Bible series is one example of

The volume could be usefully used in several ways. It is entertaining reading in its own right, even though some of the sections of names might not be too edifying for the uninitiated. It is exactly those names that become important for the student reading more seriously in an area. Now, in a day of instantaneous access to information through a computer, it is becoming increasingly clear that many do not have any critical ability to analyze the usefulness and validity of sources. After all, if it's published, it must be true! This tool could be well used when reading material by scholar in the field to see how he is evaluated by at least one of his peers, who has received assistance from numerous others in the discipline. The book should be in all seminary and Bible college libraries, and it is the kind of thing that would find a readership among interested laypeople.

David W. Baker

Anton L. Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel: Prolegomena to the Study of Ethnic Sentiments and Their Expression in the Hebrew Bible*. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1998.

In this careful and well-informed book, Sparks takes up a topic that is gaining prominence in the contemporary study of the Old Testament, namely the expression of ethnic sentiments in biblical literature. He is particularly interested in the processes through which ethnic sentiments developed in ancient Israel and to that end scrutinizes a select number of biblical texts. After introducing various issues and models related to ethnicity studies, the book moves to a survey of Assyrian, Egyptian and Greek texts. Sparks discovers that Assyrian and Egyptian texts reveal scant ethnographical concerns, in contrast to classical Greek literature (presented by Herodotus), which routinely characterizes peripheral "others" with various degraded practices. Merneptah's Stele and the Song of Deborah, two early sources about Israel, are then set apart for particular analysis and suggest, among other things, a common cultural and religious identity on the part of Israel, as well as an experience of conflict in the land.

The bulk of the work focuses on selected texts from the prophets (Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Second Isaiah) and Deuteronomy, which by virtue of scholarly consensus on their dating, Sparks regards as reliable sources for charting the development of ethnic



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sentiments. In Hosea, the author detects evidence of intensified ethnic sentiments linked to Israel's ethnic traditions, which he attributes to the influence of Assyrian imperialism. The sentiments, however, are largely lacking in Amos and Isaiah, suggesting that ethnic sentiments were strong in the Northern Kingdom but not in Judah.

Sparks' exploration of Deuteronomy is, to my mind, the most intriguing and fruitful section of the book. Deuteronomy is fundamentally concerned with the construction of identity. While Sparks rightly notes that the book orients identity primarily along religious lines, he offers cogent discussions of the way that Deuteronomy shapes a sense of ethnicity through the construction of rhetorical others (here the peoples of the land) and the codification of religious practices. (Related to the latter, see also L. Stuhlman, "Encroachment in Deuteronomy: An Analysis of the Social World of the D Code," *JBL* 109 (1990), 613-632).

The author treats texts from Jeremiah in the same chapter, and with particular attention to those that deal with the identity issues provoked by the first exile (597 B.C.). The exilic period properly constitutes the final period of study (via Ezekiel and Second Isaiah) and results, Sparks argues, in a new set of ethnic indicia and a well-integrated history of the nation's ancestors incorporated into corporate life. The final chapter offers a readable summary of the overall program of the study.

This book makes its strongest contribution in the descriptions of ethnic sentiments through the close reading of biblical texts. Peripheral arguments, such as Greek influence on the composition of Deuteronomy or Hosea's central role in promulgating a mono-Yahwist theology, are provocative but tenuous. I would also question whether the development of ethnic sentiments in the Northern Kingdom can be fully attributed to its experience as a peripheral community under the core domination of Assyria. Do we really know that much about the nature of Assyria's direct involvement in 8<sup>th</sup> Century Palestine? Could not the encroachment of Damascus, as well as the harassment that Israel endured from surrounding peoples in the latter half of the 8<sup>th</sup> Century, be the primary fodder for the intensification of ethnic sentiments?

A "prolegomena" is sure to spark these and many more questions. Despite a few quibbles, I applaud the author for tackling this neglected and timely topic and for significantly advancing our understanding of it.

L. Daniel Harlow

Joseph T. Lienhard, ed., *Old Testament III: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity, 2001.

Commentary writing isn't what it used to be. Scholarly commentaries typically offer an analysis of the grammatical, lexical, and formal attributes of the text while giving attention to issues of composition, rhetoric, and historical and social context. Popular and devotional commentaries build on the foundation laid by scholarship and focus on the biblical text's relevance to the modern church or scripture's role in deepening personal spirituality. Recent engagement with various strains of postmodern thought has crept into the enterprise and, in some quarters, has challenged the genre altogether. The interested reader who turns to a contemporary biblical commentary may therefore find exposition based on the latest information on historical context and current discussions on method or exegesis. Where a history of interpretation



vided, the review will generally entail a rehearsal of scholarship since the rise of the historical-critical method, with only sparse reference (if at all) to "pre-critical" interpretation. "critical" interpretation, it would seem, is what matters to the contemporary commentary writer. Despite their wisdom and utility, modern commentaries thus often reinforce the disconnection between the contemporary and historical experience of the church.

The work under review here is part of a series that revives a more ancient way of commenting on scripture, a way that valued the insights of the earliest interpreters of scripture. The *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* takes its cue from the medieval practice of compiling a chain of interpretation on a given passage of scripture (called a *catena*), drawn from the writings of the patristic period. Following this format, each volume in the series quotes a passage of scripture and then offers a sampling of patristic commentary on it. The reader is helped by an overview that introduces the chain of quotations and by topical headings that organize the comments in light of key aspects of the verse or passage. Precise references identify the source of each quotation, and footnotes provide information on biblical cross references and standard editions of the works quoted.

The commentary on the biblical text is rich and diverse. Fully half of the quotations focus on Exodus, reflecting the early church's interest in the particulars of the exodus, covenant, and tabernacle. As one might expect, some of the quotations adopt an allegorical or typological approach. What struck this reviewer, however, is the depth of exegetical and theological engagement with the biblical text. There is little evidence here of the naïveté that modern biblical scholars sometimes attribute to patristic commentators. Rather, the comments demonstrate that the Church Fathers were people of profound intellect as well as profound faith. There are many insights here that will bring new understanding for any interested student of the Bible.

The volume begins with a concise but informative overview of related issues: the appropriation of the Old Testament as scripture, the early church's use of the Septuagint, the seven commentaries on the Pentateuch extant from the period, and the development of an exegetical method built from classical models of interpretation. An appendix contains a table of lists of all documents cited (arranged by author), a timeline of patristic authors, biographical sketches and summaries of anonymous works, an extensive bibliography, and subject and scripture indexes. This material provides ample background and reference materials, so that even the reader unacquainted with the patristic period can use the volume with profit.

The editor is to be commended for a work that is notable both for the breadth of sources from which it draws and for the wealth of wisdom it offers. The modern exegete will find stimulating insights and "new" exegetical possibilities, while those who seek guidance in preaching or spiritual formation will find many treasures. This book should be on the shelf of any serious student of the Pentateuch.

L. Daniel Hawk

Sammi J. Schneider, *Judges*. Berit Olam. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 2000.

Although literary study of *Judges* has generated a significant body of scholarship, Schneider's is the first significant reading of the book as a whole in more than a decade.

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Working primarily from the Masoretic Text, the author undertakes a close reading of the particularly sensitive to issues of leadership and the role of women in the book. Judges begins with a quest for leadership and ends with a comment on the lack of a king in Israel. Schneider demonstrates how much of the intervening material is taken up with different forms of leadership and with evaluations (good and bad) of the monarchy (which the narrator foreshadows at numerous points). Revealing in this respect is her attention to the presence of women in the narrative whose primary role, in her view, is to test the mettle of the male leadership and serve as a barometer of how the Israelites get along in the land. The commentary on the relevant texts is often insightful and stays close to the text, although I find myself wishing for more treatment of the use of metaphor in these texts – an aspect of the narrative that has attracted many feminist writers (e.g. the bizarre conjunctions of birth and death imagery in the Jael/Deborah texts, the aura of out-of-bounds sexuality in the Samson narrative, and the power of women's speech throughout the book). Taken as a whole, Schneider's careful reading complements conventional historical-critical treatments of Judges and makes a solid contribution toward the interpretation of the book.

L. Daniel H.

Mordechai Cogan *1 Kings. The Anchor Bible* 10. New York: Doubleday, 2001. xvii + 556 hardcover, \$50.00.

This volume completes the work begun on Kings that the author published on 2 Kings in the same series in collaboration with Hayim Tadmor in 1988. It follows the familiar pattern of this prestigious series. Since it is the first of the two volumes on the books of Kings, included here are the extensive introductory materials on both books. These begin with the author's translation, which is based on the Hebrew text reconstructed during the course of the commentary rather than upon the regular Masoretic text.

Included in the introduction are discussions of the name of 'Kings' and its location in the canon, the texts and versions witnessing to it, Cogan's translation approach (which he seeks to make as consistent and literal as possible, though lapses from this can cause one to catch linguistic gems such as that in 1 Kings 1 where the elderly and failing King David not only failed to 'know' Abishag in a sexual sense [v. 4], he failed even to 'know' that his son Adonijah was trying to usurp the throne [v. 18]), language and philology (justifying the significant use of Semitic cognates in interpretation), the composition of Kings including its sources (including 'The History of the Kings of Israel,' 'The History of the Kings of Judah,' 'The Book of the deeds of Solomon,' undesignated tales, prophetic tales and narratives, and Temple records) and authors (the anonymous Deuteronomist or Deuteronomistic Historian), chronology, 'history: biblical text, archaeology, and extrabiblical documentation' (with relevant extrabiblical documents, i.e. selection of a city list of Shoshenq I/Shishak, part of one of Shalmaneser III's annals, and part of the inscription by the Syrian king Hazael known as the Tel Dan Inscription, translated in appendix), and an outline of historical events between 970 and 850. There then follows a 49-page bibliography covering works ranging between 1660 and 2000.

The body of the commentary proper begins each section with the author's translation, which is followed by notes and comments. The author explains these as follows: "The detailed notes...clarify textual and linguistic matters, in a sense, justifying the translation. In addition, persons and places are identified, and attention is called to the world of the ancient Near East. A third subdivision, the Comment, contains a discussion of the structure of the individual units and their themes, paying specific attention to literary and form-critical issues" (p. 83). The volume concludes with the appendix mentioned plus ones on the chronology of Israel and Judah, on the ancient Near East (kings of Assyria from 1012-609, of Babylonia from 625-539, and Egypt from 1033-525 BC, and indexes of subjects, references cited, and words cited from Akkadian, Arabic, Aramaic, Egyptian, Greek, Hebrew, Hittite, Latin, Phoenician, Sumerian, Syriac, Tamil and Ugaritic.

While not agreeing with all of Cogan's interpretations (as if one could find a commentary with which one could completely agree!), this work provides many excellent insights and will need to be consulted by all students of Kings. In light of this, it needs to be in every serious collection.

David W. Baker

John J. Mulder, *1 Kings*, vol 1: *1 Kings 1-11*. Historical Commentary on the Old Testament. Leuven: Peeters, 1998. xxix + 604 pp., paper, \$66.00.

This volume continues an excellent commentary series, some volumes of which have already been reviewed in this *Journal*. Unfortunately, the author passed away in 1994, before he could see his work, originally published in Dutch, appear in English. Possibly due to this loss, the introduction, while adequate, is less extensive than some in the series have been. It covers various questions of the Kings text, parallels between it and Chronicles and Josephus, authorship and dating (between 560-400 BC by redactor[s] using numerous pre-existing sources, with a discussion of the 'Deuteronomistic History'), the sections' character and content (focusing on the Davidic dynasty's consolidation of power), linguistic aspects (claiming associations with Deuteronomy and Jeremiah), the Temple of Solomon, and a very brief, and usually general, bibliography. It is in this last element that the reader will need supplementation.

The commentary itself consists of the author's own translation, a brief introduction to the pericope, and a detailed exegesis which particularly focuses on linguistic and historical material. There is little or no summary interpretation or theological reflection. Hebrew and other Semitic languages are generally left untransliterated and untranslated, so some degree of biblical knowledge is assumed. This will probably limit the volume to more serious, academic libraries. Thank the publishers for presenting this useful work, and regret the premature passing of the author, whose continued reflection would no doubt have made a useful volume excellent.

David W. Baker



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Iain Provan, *The NIV Application Commentary: Ecclesiastes-Song of Songs*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001. 399 pp., hardcover, \$24.99.

Provan, a minister in the Church of Scotland who teaches at Regent College, Vancouver, British Columbia, has written one of the most recent additions to a fine series of commentaries, useful for all who take their study and exegesis of the Bible seriously. I began collecting volumes in this series a few years ago on the recommendation of a colleague, and have been grateful for the insights provided by each author.

Provan's volume on Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs (or Song of Solomon) follows the same format as the others in the series. It begins with an introduction to each book, an outline, and a selected bibliography. What follows is a transcription of the text in the New International Version, pericope by pericope. This is followed by an exegetical study under the title "Original Meaning". "Bridging Contexts" makes up the next section, which seeks to move the reader from the original context to today's. Finally, the "Contemporary Significance" section applies the text to contemporary times.

For the sake of this review, I chose to study the section on the familiar text of Ecclesiastes 3.1-22. The author's exegetical section is very well done, and is accessible to both pastors and lay students of the text. As is common throughout the series, words in an original biblical language are printed in a transliterated format. Provan does not assume that every reader understands Hebrew, and so translates the words in question as part of the context of his writing. Further, he will often give an alternate translation to that offered by the New International Version. If a grammatical issue arises, which might seem somewhat ancillary to the point of statement he is making, he places it in a footnote. I found even the footnotes helpful, though skipping over them does not damage the integrity of the scholarship.

The "Bridging Contexts" section does exactly that: it bridges the text in question with the rest of the Old Testament (and Old Testament history), and with the New Testament in thematic context. Provan writes of a common theme throughout the section (in this case, "The Lord is in control of time", p. 96). Not unlike Qohelet himself, the author plays something of a prophetic role when he says, "We forget that the Bible has not been given to us primarily to satisfy our curiosity, but to engage our lives. We forget that the resurrection itself does not appear primarily in the New Testament as an idea about the future, but as a ground for present faith and holiness" (p. 97). This is a word from the Lord for us all, and something that pastors and teachers of Scripture can apply to our own lives, as well as to the lives of our hearers.

Provan is very careful in his section on "Contemporary Significance" to avoid the pitfall that can happen so easily in such a pericope on application: staleness. The possibility always exists, when writing a commentary and seeking to make it apply to the day at hand, that the application will become 'not applicable'. While it may have been relevant to the time it was written, it runs the risk of becoming irrelevant to the times should the book sit on the shelf for five, ten, or twenty years. Provan's application of the text, while offering contemporary illustrations, is not so contemporary that it may cease to be useful to the preacher in another generation. He cites the concept of life after death as a commonality between the text and our society, which is true in virtually any age. He mentions the "proliferation of 'spiritualities'" (p. 98), which is common today – though since future generations may note this era for being



spiritual' (but not necessarily in the right ways), it will still serve as a good illustration in years come. The author also cites the common phrase *carpe diem*, and relates it to the text, with a theological critique of its use in the film *Dead Poets Society* in light of the biblical understanding of the value of seizing the day. He is not afraid to critique the church, reminding us that the Christian faith is not so much about oppressive rules as it is about loving and enjoying God.

I highly recommend *The NIV Application Commentary* series as a valuable tool for those who want to make the Bible come alive in their lives and in the lives of those they influence.

Jeffrey Loach

Marva J. Dawn, *To Walk and Not Faint: A Month of Meditations on Isaiah 40*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997. xiii + 189 pp., paper, \$15.00.

Marva Dawn is a gifted writer and speaker on areas where biblical studies and theology intersect with everyday life. Herself suffering from a number of physical infirmities, she is able to write, and show, God through the darkness. Those who appreciate her many writings will find benefit here as well.

After a brief introduction to how she wants people still to hear God in their daily experiences, Dawn places Isaiah 40 in its literary and historical context. She then has brief, 4-6 verse meditations on each of the 31 verses of the chapter, making a handy monthly devotional cycle. While not a commentary per se, the book looks seriously but readably at words, structure, and theology, particularly practical or applicational theology. It explores how centuries old religious literature can connect with our hectic, all too unreligious lives. Each section ends with a series of questions for further meditation, seeking personal, missional, and ecclesiological application of each verse of this key theological text.

The book will be useful for personal and corporate Bible study and prayer. Small groups should find it helpful as part of their spiritual formation, and students and preachers can use it as a model of making study of scripture relevant so it will touch peoples' lives.

David W. Baker

W. Dobbs-Allsopp, *Lamentations*. Interpretation. Louisville: John Knox Press, 2002. Hardcover, \$21.95.

This commentary is part of the Interpretation series of Bible commentaries designed for teaching and preaching. Dobbs-Allsopp writes with the desire that the discussions in this commentary be overheard by a Jewish audience as well. The text of the commentary was written before the September 11<sup>th</sup> attack, but is understood by the readers in a different manner after the tragedy. Is *Lamentations* a book more contemporary than we would like for life in this new century? *Lamentations*, notes the author, is perhaps known best from its use in services commemorating Jewish national calamities, particularly the destruction of the temple (first and second) and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Noted in the preface are the lines from

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the opening of Lamentations that were the first words from one New Jersey pulpit on the day after the terrible events of September 11, 2001: '*How lonely sits the city that once was full of people!*'

One will find that this commentary fits within the scope of the Interpretation series, an umbrella of commentaries published by John Knox Press. The series attempts to bridge the gap between more scholarly commentaries and the practicalities of the pulpit.

Dobbs-Allsopp's honest analysis of Lamentations as a whole underscores the text's harshness and its fumbling for answers that never come. The author refuses to back away from the harsh truth of the text, allowing the reader to see the hope that rises out of the ashes and ruins of Jerusalem. The commentary is helpful in seeing the poetic structure of Lamentations and 'gives permission to grieve and provides a vocabulary for grief.' Hope hangs on by the thinning of threads and this is one of the underlying messages of Lamentations.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, Texas

I. H. Marshall, ed., *Moulton and Geden Concordance to the Greek New Testament*. Sixth Edition, Fully Revised. London and New York: T. & T. Clark, 2002. xxi + 1121 pp., hardcover \$100.00.

The Concordance compiled by W. F. Moulton and A. S. Geden, revised and supplemented by H. K. Moulton in 1978, has been the standard Greek-text concordance for a scholarly study of the New Testament for over a century. I. H. Marshall, with a team of dedicated laborers, has made this tool even more accurate, user-friendly, and visually appealing. This latest revision provides a concordance not only to the Greek texts of Wescott and Hort and Tischendorf, but also the fourth edition of the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament, the now-standard eclectic text. Every word except for the most common (the definite article, *de*, and *kai*) is represented. H. K. Moulton's supplement of prepositions has been fully incorporated into the main text, rather than standing at the back. Each occurrence of a word is given a separate entry, even when found within the same verse. Strong's numbering system has been discarded, which is appropriate since that English-Greek resource has long-since become outmoded by the lexical advances made by several generations. The whole has been typeset in a much more visually appealing font.

Dr. Marshall has retained the best features of the original concordance, most notably the listing of common words according to particular forms or usages rather than all together under one entry. For example, the entry for *eimi*, the verb "to be," does not merely give an undifferentiated string of occurrences of the word, but rather groups these by grammatical form (present-tense indicative forms, then subjunctives, optatives, imperatives, and participles; then imperfect and future forms). The entries for *ei*, the word "if," are subgrouped according to the common uses of the word: *ei*; *ei mē*; *ei tis*, etc. This makes for a much more helpful concordance as the student can both examine the occurrences of a particular form or usage in the New Testament, as well as have access to the complete array of uses of a word.

David A. deSilva

Wald Armstrong, ed., *The Truth About Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. 160 pp., paper.

The fourth Anglican Institute Conference Birmingham Alabama 1997 provided the forum for the nine papers published in this volume. Papers were given by Fleming Rutledge, Walter W. L. Eversley, Edward L. Salmon, John Koenig, Diogenes Allen and Gareth Jones. In view of their contribution to current debates about *Christology* I will focus on those offered by N. Wright and Alister Mc Grath.

Wright's short essay 'Jesus and the Quest' usefully sets the 'quest' for the historical Jesus (which has been rumbling along now for a quarter of a century) against the background of Enlightenment. The Jesus Seminar follows the trajectory of William Wrede, Ed Sanders is in line of Albert Schweitzer and Luke Timothy Johnson is a kind of Martin Kähler *redivivus*. Equally valuable is his summary of some elements of the lengthy *Jesus and the Victory of God*. What we have come to expect from Tom Wright all this is done with enviable lucidity and erudition and with even-handedness to those from whom he differs.

Underlying this essay is Wright's passion for Jesus and the Gospel as *history*. Commitment to the historical Jesus is a matter of genuine discipleship. We must abandon Jesus and the NT ('the Superman myth') as a mere vehicle for timeless truths for this is not true to history and it gets close to the old heresy of Docetism.

He concludes with three 'reconstructions' of the historical Jesus as relating to (a) the Kingdom of God and Eschatology; (b) The Meaning of the Cross, and (c) Jesus and the God of Israel. Jesus' context was Israel suffering for her sins under Gentile occupation where any promise of the 'kingdom of God' meant political liberation. His 'kingdom' message had nothing to do with heaven post mortem but the post-exilic prophets' hope of the restoration of Israel, her temple and her people. As 'Messiah' Jesus was the Lord's Anointed agent for this moment; 'Messiah' did not then imply deity as the Second Person of the Trinity. Jesus' death was the concentration in the sufferings of one man (the Servant of the Lord) of the so-called 'messianic woes' in which he took on himself the judgment of God for Israel's sins. By this act Jesus redeemed Israel and provided for the redemption of the world. Jesus saw himself as Yahweh's dynamic presence with his people. God was 'with him,' showed his face in Jesus' suffering.

But what is Wright's *Christology* in this short essay? On one hand he brackets himself with Ed Sanders and Ben Meyer in following Albert Schweitzer's identification of Jesus as an apocalyptic prophet. On the other, however, he states that 'Jesus believed he was Israel's Messiah'. It's unclear here whether Wright's Jesus is equally *both* 'Prophet' and 'Messiah', or whether he was at heart the one and only metaphorically the other, that is, whether he was a 'messianic' prophet or a 'prophetic' Messiah? This is unfortunate since his position is ambiguous in *Victory* where Jesus' understanding of himself as the Messiah is strongly argued.

In short, while this brief essay eases us into Tom Wright's innovative Christology, I do not think the author has altogether done justice to his own exposition of Jesus as the Christ articulated in *Victory* (see pp. 477-539). Furthermore, Wright's attitude to questions of ontology remains unclear to me. It is one thing to observe that in Jesus God was dynamically present and active. But was that divine presence and activity *unique* to Jesus in ways that the Nicene fathers struggled to express in ontological terms notably in the association that the Son was *homoousios* with the Father?



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In his 'Jesus: The Only Way?' Alister McGrath addresses the pressing problem of uniqueness of Christ for Christians in pluralistic western societies. This problem is sharpened by the distinction noted by Lesslie Newbigin between pluralism 'as a fact of life and... an ideology'. It is the latter that imposes such pressure on Christians as to both their own beliefs and their proclamation of the gospel which, if they hold to, brings the odium of political correctness.

McGrath urges dialogue between Christians and others, though not with the prospect of homogenizing the various viewpoints. On the contrary, McGrath sees dialogue as an opportunity to understand what others believe and in a context of mutual respect to press the claims of Christ. Such dialogue effectively forces Christians to re-assess their own foundations for faith and occasionally to re-open or re-align aspects of the faith under the pressure of debate. McGrath laments that dialogue frequently skirts the critical differences, e.g., between Christians and Jews regarding the Incarnation of the Son of God.

In an exploration of semantic issues McGrath clarifies who 'God' is according to Christians and what they mean by 'salvation'. It is as if you only need to exegesis these to get that Jesus is, indeed, the 'only way' whether to 'God' or to 'salvation'. 'God' is 'Christ-like' and 'salvation' is a redemptive relationship between God and his people achieved in and by Christ.

McGrath declares this salvation to be open to all people to which end he encourages evangelism. But it is not made clear whether those who do not specifically confess Christianity actually enjoy that salvation. Put bluntly, are those outside Christ *lost*?

Paul Barnett, Bishop of North Sydney

Ronald Brownrigg, *Who's Who in the New Testament*. London/ New York: Routledge, 2002. 200 pp., paper, \$14.95.

Lavinia Cohn-Sherbok, *Who's Who in Christianity*. London/ New York: Routledge, 2002. 200 pp., paper, \$14.95.

These two volumes are part of the Routledge Who's Who series which are meant to provide accessible biographical guides to the average reader. Other volumes in the series include Who's Who in Shakespeare; Who's Who in Jewish History; Who's Who in Twentieth-Century World Poetry. The series is not meant for scholarly research but in the instance of both of the volumes reviewed provide brief summaries of an individual's biography without commentary on significance assessed. Attention is given to relevant environment and archaeological evidence. The editors assume little knowledge of places and persons, therefore the reader is reminded of chronology of events plus other names and dates which might be helpful.

Who's Who in the New Testament is comprehensive including all those individuals mentioned by name in the New Testament along with those who are mentioned but are unnamed (the centurion, political groups, etc.) Of value is the English translation of many names cited. For example, Eutychus who unfortunately fell asleep during a long sermon of Paul, fell from a second story window. Fortunately, Paul ran to his rescue and pronounced him not dead but alive (Acts 20:9). The Greek translation of Eutychus is "fortunate."



Who's Who in Christianity cannot be as comprehensive as the former volume on individuals in the New Testament. Some individuals such as Jesus, Paul, Martin Luther, Pope John XXIII could not be overlooked. Other entries were selected as representatives of certain historical eras or schools of thought. Each individual selected had a continuing effect on the Christian church. Helpful are the short bibliographical references cited after an individual's entry.

This reviewer finds these volumes to be readable and concise. Of course, for any serious study these descriptions would be of little use. They are designed as the preface says for the ordinary reader.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, TX

Greg Carey and L. G. Bloomquist, eds., *Vision and Persuasion: Rhetorical Dimensions of Apocalyptic Discourse*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1999. xii + 203 pp., paper, \$22.99.

This collection of essays seeks to bring the insights of rhetorical and socio-rhetorical criticism to bear on a body of literature that is least receptive to "traditional" rhetorical analysis, namely apocalypses. The essays are held together by a common interest in unpacking the strategies and techniques by which authors of apocalypses try to persuade their hearers to adopt a particular view of the world and set of attitudes and responses to the world. The collection includes the following contributions:

- Greg Carey, "Introduction: Apocalyptic Discourse, Apocalyptic Rhetoric"  
D. C. Polaski, "Deconstruction, Construction, Argumentation: A Rhetorical Reading of Isaiah 24-27"  
J. Kaltner, "Is Daniel Also among the Prophets? The Rhetoric of Daniel 10-12"  
D. F. Watson, "Paul's Appropriation of Apocalyptic Discourse: The Rhetorical Strategy of 1 Thessalonians"  
G. C. Steele, "Discipline and Disclosure: Paul's Apocalyptic Asceticism in 1 Corinthians"  
V. K. Robbins, "Rhetorical Ritual: Apocalyptic Discourse in Mark 13"  
D. A. deSilva, "Fourth Ezra: Reaffirming Jewish Cultural Values through Apocalyptic Rhetoric"  
E. M. Humphrey, "In Search of a Voice: Rhetoric through Sight and Sound in Revelation 11:15 -- 12:17"  
Greg Carey, "The Ascension of Isaiah: Characterization and Conflict"  
L. G. Bloomquist, "Methodological Criteria for Apocalyptic Rhetoric: A Suggestion for the Expanded Use of Sociorhetorical Analysis"

*Vision and Persuasion* is a groundbreaking work, since only a few articles had been published prior to this volume on the subject of the rhetoric of apocalypses. This volume anticipates, moreover, many more studies to come in this growing arena of scholarship.

David A. deSilva

## Reviews

N. Clayton Croy, *Endurance in Suffering: Hebrews 12:1-13 in its Rhetorical, Religious, Philosophical Context*. SNTSMS 98. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. x + pp., \$59.95.

Clayton Croy's published dissertation provides a careful and sound analysis of Heb 12:1-13, particularly its theology of suffering in light of Greco-Roman and Jewish conversations about the meaning and purpose of suffering. Croy's examination of the athletic metaphor woven in throughout this passage sheds significant light on Heb 12:1-4, particularly regarding the meaning of "witnesses" in 12:1 and the proper translation of the preposition *ἀντί* (12:2) as "view to" rather than "instead of." He also advances a compelling argument for understanding God's discipline in 12:5-11 as educative discipline rather than corrective punishment, exposing along the way the ideological commitments that tend to drive commentators to read this passage as punitive chastisement.

This work is a model dissertation in its formulation of the question, its critical interaction with the history of interpretation, its detailed examination of both the Greco-Roman and Jewish backgrounds informing a New Testament text, its methodological rigor, and its commitment to bring the fruits of exegetical work to bear on theological and pastoral applications of the text. It will become necessary reading for all future interpretation of Heb 12:1-13.

David A. deSilva

*Holman Christian Standard Bible: Reader's Text New Testament*. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2001. 372 pp., \$6.99.

This new translation seeks to provide an accurate representation of the original Greek in current, idiomatic, readable English. It moves between "formal equivalence" (the attempt to represent to syntax of the original, represented in the extreme by the NASB) and "dynamic equivalence" (the attempt to capture the meaning of the original, represented in the extreme by the Living Bible and the Message). In general, the result is an accurate, contemporary translation. In some places, such as 1 Peter 2:7 and 3:7, it has overcome generations of faulty translation, showing that the team of translators indeed took pains to "rediscover" the meaning of the Greek rather than be influenced unduly by English predecessors like the KJV and RSV. Unlike the NRSV and the NIV "inclusive version," the HCSB does not seek "political correctness." The desire for a completely inclusive translation led the NRSV translation committee to replace many instances of "brothers," for example, with "believers" or "friends," "beloved," diluting the impression of "kinship" that the New Testament author is intentionally trying to create. However, I would have found it preferable for both the NRSV and HCSB to use "brothers and sisters" consistently, achieving both the preservation of the meaning of the original and the benefits of non-gender specific language.

Of course, no translation is perfect, and all are ideologically motivated. The ideology of the HCSB may be apparent in its decision to place a subject heading between Eph 5:21

h 5:22, thus causing a reader to pause between the injunction to mutual submission and the instructions given to husband and wife. Placement of a subject heading here is a well-known device for muting the mutual submission that is to mark all Christian relationships so that the hierarchical model of the nuclear family (especially of marriage) may be retained and legitimated on the basis of Eph 5:22 and following (a position that could not be maintained if one began at Eph 5:21). Of course, the fact that Eph 5:22 has no verb and depends completely on Eph 5:21 for its verb to be supplied should lead any Bible translator to keep these verses together in a single sentence (indeed, even a single sentence).

But even more objectionable than such infelicities in the translation are the reductions to each book of the New Testament. These consist of brief notes touching on the following: the title; the key text (canon within the canon?); key term; one-sentence summary; and purpose. The one-sentence summaries are invariably reductions of the book to a piece of propositional theology. The summary of Hebrews, for example, reads as follows: "Jesus Christ, who is better than the angels, Moses, Joshua, and the Hebrew high priests, offered a better sacrifice and instituted a better covenant, making the old covenant obsolete and underscoring it as the basis for God's approval." The "summary" represents only the propositional or propositional sections of Hebrews, and leaves the equally prominent -- and rhetorically dominant -- hortatory sections completely unrepresented. Is this an accident? a choice? Whichever, it strikes this reviewer as unwise. The New Testament authors seek to transform people's hearts and lives, not merely present propositional truths, and any presumption to "summarize" a New Testament book should reflect this larger purpose. Perhaps, then, the summary of Hebrews could better read, "Since Jesus Christ has outdone all previous mediators of divine favor in bringing us access to God, Christians are challenged to keep faith with Jesus no matter what assurances are brought to bear on them." At any rate, some summary that preserved both the propositional/propositional and the life-shaping emphases of Hebrews would have been more appropriate.

In some instances, the single-sentence summary is clearly enforcing the ideology of the translators/editors. For example, the message of Galatians is alleged to be that "sinners are justified and live out a godly life by trusting in Jesus Christ alone, rather than by keeping the law and doing good works." First, this summary statement assumes that Paul has to polemicize against good works as a basis for justification. In fact, he does not. He must only polemicize against those regulations of Torah and other Jewish customs that reinforce the distinction between Jew and Gentile. Paul, in fact, believes that doing good works leads to eternal reward (Romans 2:6-11). Second, "living out a godly life" must include the doing of good works for Paul, who expects to find "faith working through love" among his converts (Gal 5:6). So this summary statement tries to make the reader filter Galatians through a "good works versus faith" debate that never happened in Paul's career, and that represents a shallow understanding of the Reformation issues that gave rise to such slogans as "faith alone" in the first place. The summary sentence in Romans, which clarifies that justification means "imputed" righteousness, betrays a similar ideology, according to which Paul is not really concerned with transforming lives and hearts so that people actually do what is righteous before God as a result of following the Spirit given to



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them. The effect of these introductions is to provide a safe, conservative, proposition-oriented lens for the reading of the whole.

As with all translations, one needs to be wary in the use of this one. It is but representation of the Word of God, and not the thing in itself. In any case, its editorial introductions should be ignored completely in favor of a more judicious introduction to the New Testament.

David A. deSilva

Morna Hooker, *The Signs of a Prophet: The Prophetic Actions of Jesus*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 1997. 114 pp., paper, \$14.00.

*Signs* began as the Schaffer lectures delivered at Yale University (1995).

The core argument of *Signs* is that historically Jesus was seen (by many) in his day as prophet.

This affirmation is set against a sketch of prophetic activity in the OT. Here three kinds of such activity are identified. First, there are prophetic actions which manifest divine power (e.g., Moses dividing the Red Sea to allow the Hebrews to escape). Second, there are miraculous symbols which point to an act of God in the future (e.g., Jeremiah breaking a pot to point to the coming destruction of Jerusalem). Third, Professor Hooker points to miraculous signs that authenticate the genuineness of the prophet (e.g., Moses' staff that turns into a snake).

Morna Hooker notes that our usual identification of 'prophets' with the 'writing prophets' blurs the reality that Moses, Samuel, Elijah and Elisha were also prophets. This is especially significant in that these non-writing prophets were often associated with the various kinds of 'signs' noted above.

But was there a 'cessation of prophecy' with the completion of the Canon? To be sure, there were no more *writing* prophets. Yet Qumran texts and NT references make it abundantly clear that an expectation existed for the coming of 'a prophet like Moses' who is also called 'prophet' (as prophesied in Deut 18:18ff). Furthermore, a related hope was held for an Elijah-type prophet. Thus the rise of a John the Baptist, of various 'sign prophets' c. A.D. 40-70 (cf. Theudas and the Egyptian) and the rise of Jesus himself as a prophet agreeably fits in with beliefs of the post-Malachi era.

It is against this analysis and reconstruction that Professor Hooker points to Jesus as 'prophet mighty in word and deed'. The 'signs' that Jesus was, indeed, such a prophet were in particular. *First*, Jesus' miracles of exorcism and healing (whose historicity she accepts in broad terms; the 'nature' miracles she leaves out of account), which coincide with the category of OT miracle actions, point to the eschatological inbreaking of the Kingdom of God. But, *second*, there were also, as in the second OT species, non-miraculous symbols associated with Jesus. Among these were the choice of the Twelve, eating with outcasts and sinners at the final acts in Jerusalem – riding up to the City, the cursing of the fig tree, the clearing of the Temple and the institution of the Fellowship Meal. A critical part of Hooker's argument is that Jesus performed no sign authenticating his own ministry *per se* (the third OT category, not noted above).



Morna Hooker allows that each evangelist, in his own way, 'interprets' Jesus to be more than a Prophet' the title of her final chapter. Mark and Matthew see Jesus as the Christ. Luke he is, above all, the 'prophet like Moses' and in John the one in whose miracle 'works' we see God at work.

This raises some very large issues.

First, I ask whether Hooker's threefold format of OT 'signs' in her opening chapter did set up a too rigid template by which Jesus as a prophet must be measured and assessed?

Second, it seems likely that Professor Hooker has downplayed Jesus' deliberate choice of Twelve to 'follow' and 'be with' him. In light of the historic scattering of the twelve tribes Jesus' calling of Twelve must be considered both astonishing and potent in its times. Here is a gathered and a re-constituted Israel attached to Jesus. But this in turn must be connected with Jesus' 'new temple' Jesus said would be raised after three days.

Third, if *historically* Jesus was 'a prophet mighty in word and deed' how is it that the Gospel writers identifies his book and focuses its contents on Jesus as the Christ/the Messiah. To my mind, I do not believe Hooker has explained the process by which Jesus has come to be presented as the Christ and why Jesus as (the) prophet took a diminished role.

Here I offer two observations.

One is (as Vermes observed in *Jesus the Jew*, 1973) that the rise of the 'sign prophets' beginning with Theudas in the forties served to diminish the apostles' emphasis on Jesus as 'the prophet' which was true of Jesus historically and which was declared kerygmatically (in some of his speeches in Acts).

The other is that the disciples' recognition of Jesus as the Christ, and Jesus' acceptance of that title at Caesarea Philippi is, indeed, *historical*. To be sure, Jesus' initial 'Kingdom' proclamation in words and its 'sign', the expulsion of unclean spirits, was a 'prophetic' activity, one that dominated the earlier part of the Public Ministry. But over time it dawned on the disciples and came to be articulated by Peter for the Twelve that Jesus was the 'king of God's Kingdom', thus 'more than a prophet', the very Messiah and Son of David himself. From that confession given and received every subsequent action of Jesus was first and foremost *messianic*. The march by the Son of David towards David's City, the kingly Entry to Jerusalem, the cursing of the unresponding Fig tree, the 'sign' of the replacement of the Temple with a genuinely Davidic 'house'. Agreed, these 'signs' were *prophetic* in idiom, but only in a subsidiary sense. Primarily they were *messianic* signs. In David's City and to David's 'house' came the heir of David, his 'seed' to assume his kingly rule from which to build a new 'house'.

If, as I believe, these events are historical they must reflect Jesus' own mind so as to his identity and mission. In turn, these formed and shaped the thinking of the first Christians and established that the thought of the early church and its kerygma were messianic so that its people from the middle thirties were dubbed *Christianoil* 'adherents of the Christ'. Thus the thought of the NT is dominated by *Christology* that derived from Jesus himself. Hooker's preoccupation with Jesus as prophet obscures this.

Paul Barnett, Bishop of North Sydney

## Reviews

John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 3. *Companions Competitors*. Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York: Doubleday, 2001. xiv + 669 hardcover, \$42.50.

The third volume of Meier's projected four volume work, *A Marginal Jew*, focuses on the subtitle states, on those who surrounded Jesus, both companions and competitors. As in previous two volumes, Meier's scholarship is outstanding, his documentation massive, and conclusions well reasoned. While the reader may not agree with all Meier has to say, one is greatly enriched by the experience.

The book is divided into two major sections, "Jesus the Jew and His Jewish Followers" (pp. 1-285) and "Jesus the Jew and His Jewish Competitors" (pp. 287-613). The book concludes (pp. 614-647) with a section entitled "Integrating Jesus' Jewish Relationships into the Whole Picture." In the first section, the followers of Jesus are divided into three groups, the crowds, the disciples and the twelve. The crowds are defined as those who show some peripheral interest in Jesus, but do not follow him closely. The disciples include those, such as Levi the tax collector, Mark and the Beloved Disciple of John, who follow Jesus, but who may not have been members of the Twelve.

The Twelve, Jesus' most well known disciples, represent Jesus' eschatological vision, looking forward to the reconstitution of Israel (see pp. 136-137). While there are small variations in the lists, the most significant being the replacement of Mark's Thaddeus with "Jude of James" in Luke 6, the lists demonstrate remarkable stability. Meier finds this fact all the more remarkable since the lists are found in various strata of gospel tradition (see pp. 128-141). Thus, Meier accepts the historicity of the twelve as deriving from the ministry of Jesus, a position that places him in opposition to the findings of Crossan and the Jesus Seminar.

The second section of Meier's book discusses Jesus' opponents. Here the reader finds one of the most readable and up to date examinations of the Pharisees (pp. 289-388), Sadducees (pp. 389-487) and Essenes and other groups (pp. 488-613) available in English. While the discussion is masterful, there may be some anxiety on the part of non-specialists as they find how little is known about the first two groups. While laity and pastors alike may be confident in Josephus' descriptions of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes, Meier points out how unreliable these descriptions are. Furthermore, descriptions of the Sadducees come almost exclusively from their opponents, with earliest mention of their beliefs being found in Mk 12:18. Meier's treatment of the Sadducees, on the other hand, is sympathetic, viewing their conclusions as the product of a plain reading of the OT text, much as required by later historical criticism.

Meier's analysis of the Essenes may cause some discomfort for those hoping that the finds from Qumran would illuminate our understanding of Jesus and his message. In fact, the Essenes and Jesus are worlds apart, especially in regard to issues of purity. While there are superficial agreements in their eschatology, the understanding of who constitutes Israel, by comparing Jesus' inclusive view with the Essenes' extremely exclusive vision, is very different. While we may be able to understand more about the diversity of Palestinian Judaism as a result of the discoveries of the Dead Sea community, Meier is somewhat skeptical about how much the finds help us in our recovery of the message of the historical Jesus.

In conclusion, Meier's analysis is one of the most even-handed available. His scholarship may be daunting for those not used to reading chapters where the notes are of equal worth to the text, but the effort is rewarding. Since this work is volume 3 in a 4 volume work, it has to be read in context of the other volumes, and, in fact, the reader is often referred back to findings of volumes 1-2. Meier is certainly not an evangelical, but his work gives evangelicals useful insights and tools for confronting some of the more extreme and media popular representations of the life and message of Jesus, such as the pronouncements issuing forth from the Biblical Seminar, or being given a hearing on the *Discovery Channel*. Meier's scholarship is solid, and will stand the test of time.

Russell Morton

Alan Millard, *Reading and Writing in the Time of Jesus*. The Biblical Seminar 69; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000. 228 pp., paper, \$31.95.

Alan Millard is the Rankin Professor of Hebrew and Ancient Semitic Languages at the School of Archaeology, Classics and Oriental Studies, University of Liverpool. His special interest in writing and literacy on the ancient Near East has led him to look at the same topic during the NT period. Two sentences from Millard's preface show what he is about in this volume: "not only the questions of who wrote and why need to be answered, but also of which languages were used for which purposes and whether there were differences between the religious, the literary and the legal and between the written and the spoken.... The recent documentary discoveries demand a new survey of the uses of writing [in Palestine] and a reassessment of the possibility that some people who heard Jesus speaking may have recorded his words." The later point is especially important since some claim a large time gap between Jesus' sayings and any documentation of it and of his teachings. This is then allied with an understanding of the fragmentary material being unreliable and tendentious.

The book is divided into 8 chapters. The first explores 'ancient books and their survival.' Writing materials and surviving texts of various genres are discussed. Chapter two looks at 'early Christian manuscripts,' including complete Bibles and parchment copies, the writing of books, pre-Constantinian works, and even possible first century Christian fragments found among the material found in the vicinity of the Dead Sea (the actual existence of which is doubted by Millard). Chapter three covers 'the form of the book: page versus roll', distinguishing between the scroll and the codex forms of manuscripts. Chapter four looks at 'writing in Hellenistic Palestine,' especially focusing on the various languages used in the region (Latin, Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew) and the types of material recorded in each. Quotations and black-and-white photographs illustrate the material under discussion. Chapter four ('a polyglot society') looks at bi- (or even poly-)lingualism in this period. Millard determines that Jesus would have spoken Aramaic, read Hebrew, and probably read and used Greek, and, from the evidence of the Gospels themselves, Latin probably was used by speakers of the period as well. While not stating that Jesus knew Latin, Millard's predecessor at Liverpool, W.J. Martin suggested that Peter might well have spoken it in order to sell his fish with the Latin aristocracy living near the Sea of Galilee (oral communication).



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Chapter six asks 'who read and who wrote?' There he makes the useful distinction between the two activities, a distinction all too apparent by those who have to grade student papers. Millard suggests that in all but the smallest towns people would have had access at least to ones who could read, and, while there were professional writers/scribes, the skill was widespread, though not universally pervasive, beyond them. In chapter 7 we are asked where we need to depend for information upon 'oral traditions or written reports,' and import a distinction since many understand the former to mean less accuracy. An influential group of adherents to approaches of form criticism espouse this position, and analysis of Jewish (particularly rabbinic) pedagogy as well as that among the early Greeks suggests that orality was important. Millard, while accepting aspects of form criticism, critiques it, especially as regards the strict dichotomy between oral and written. He argues that writing would have been used alongside oral transmission 'at all levels of society'. The final chapter explores 'writing and the Gospels,' especially looking at the Dead Sea document MMT, which records the practices of the Dead Sea community, which was divergent from mainstream Judaism. Their records were parallel to those of the Gospel writers who also were departing from some of the main tenets of the Jewish brethren. Millard concludes that "the case being made is for notes of individual sayings or a collection of some, and reports of remarkable events. This is not to say the Evangelists began to compose the Gospels in Jesus' lifetime, but that some, possibly much, of our source material was preserved in writing from that period, especially accounts of the distinct teachings and actions of Jesus." This is a significant conclusion, and directly at odds with much contemporary scholarship, not least of which that claiming to that designation by the Jesus Seminar.

The book is illustrated by 42 black-and-white photographs of textual evidence on a number of different media. It concludes with a 24-page bibliography that includes some material up to 2000 and indexes of references, subjects, foreign words, and authors cited. The book is a model of careful scholarship looking for objective evidence on an important topic. It must be in any serious academic library, and laypeople will also find it interesting and useful.

David W. Ball

Timothy B. Savage, *Power through Weakness: Paul's Understanding of Christian Ministry in 1 Corinthians*. SNTSMS 86; Cambridge/New York/Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1997. xvi + 251 pp., hardcover, \$54.95.

This study is a revised Cambridge doctoral thesis completed under Professor M. M. Hooker in 1987. The subject is the central paradox stated by Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:10, "When I am weak then I am strong". The key questions addressed are why should Paul relish weakness? In what way could he ever be regarded as being strong? Against whom is he defending his ministry? And, what are his opponents advocating? Savage argues that Paul's interaction can be understood *only* in light of social realities in the Corinthian community, understood on basis of what we know about Corinthian society as a whole. The use of written sources is fairly routine but he makes good use of unwritten sources. The resulting picture of ordinary people in the first century Graeco-Roman world is however unconvincingly uniform.



Part I, comprising the first two chapters, provides a rather rapid overview of the background to the paradox, covering the social setting of first century Corinth, then what Savage sees to be the four ministerial issues facing Paul in Corinth – his failure to boast, unimpressive physical presence, inferior public speech and refusal to accept financial support. According to Savage, late Hellenism promoted the ability of the individual to determine his own worth. This is very general and the study advances at this stage in little more than a series of notes. Roman emphasis on social stratification offered a framework for measuring such worth and the incentive to be ambitious through wealth or some other means – all be acknowledged by others as people sought applause from others to bolster their self-esteem. Religion itself offered contact with the benefits such as health, wealth, protection and sustenance rather than moral transformation. And it served them “on their own terms – not to change them, but to exalt them” (page 34). They understood Paul’s refusal to boast as a lack of self-confidence and personal pre-eminence (page 34), his physical presence is weak because he lacks boldness when dealing with opposition. His speaking style lacks arrogance and forcefulness and the fact that he refused financial support robs them of the opportunity to boast of their own generosity, forcing them also to identify with his poverty (page 93).

Scholarship has tended to account for Corinthian dissatisfaction with Paul’s ministry by assuming that it originated with missionary intruders who opposed Paul, that their criticisms were religious in nature, and that all of this can be inferred from Paul’s apology. By contrast Savage argues that those who have been primarily disturbed by Paul’s ministry are Christian converts of the “freedmen class” who are influenced by Graeco-Roman attitudes towards both people and religion.

Part II, chapters 3 to 6, concentrates upon the meaning of “power through weakness”. Chapter 3 examines the *nature* of Christian ministry from the perspective of the glory of Christ, and chapter 4 from the perspective of the shame of the cross. Chapter 5 looks at the *pattern* of Christian ministry from the perspective of glory through shame and chapter 6 from the perspective of power through weakness. Paul asserts a paradoxical glory – an eschatological light and glory missed by many owing to their inability to see, blinded as they were by their own self-exaltation. This light appeared in Christ and was also missed since it was manifested in the cross. It can only be seen with eyes of the heart. It is not manifested through self-exaltation, grandiose speech and self-glorification but through humble service and self-emptying. So that the real power of the gospel was manifested through weakness. A brief conclusion is followed by an appendix dealing with the literary unity of chapters 10-13.

This is a satisfying study providing a reasonably convincing presentation of the situation at Corinth. It demonstrates just how radical Paul’s concept of ministry was in comparison to secularised Corinth. Savage demonstrates the relevance of popular culture in shaping the religious attitudes and social needs of first-century Christians in the Graeco-Roman world though he makes it appear rather monolithic. Moreover it is debatable that this social analysis can account for everything in Corinth. There were also specifically *religious* movements which had identifiable convictions which occasioned conflict and this cultural dimension must be examined to supplement Savage’s study. Sometimes categories foreign to the original are introduced as when we are told that the law encouraged “self-absorption” (page 136). And

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strangely enough 2 Cor 12:9 receives little direct attention, though there is much important exposition.

Robert Willoughby, London Bible Coll

John Stott, *The Story of the New Testament: Men with a Message*. Revised by Stephen Motyer. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001. 157 pp., hardcover, \$16.99.

Originally published in 1954 with the title *Men with a Message*, this New Testament introduction highlights the important contributions of each biblical author. Stott's main purpose is to prove that the message of each man is the outgrowth of his life and experience with Christ. Therefore, each chapter revolves around one New Testament author and draws the reader into the life of that person. Stott then draws the author's unique biblical themes from an understanding of his personal background. For example, the chapter on Mark is equally divided between "Mark the Man," "Mark the Writer," and "Mark's Message." Stott's secondary purpose is to show that the New Testament message is in fact unified in spite of the fact that it comes from such a diverse group of men.

The average, evangelical lay person who has had little exposure to scholarly works would be attracted to this volume for several reasons. First of all, such an audience tends to be more familiar with the characters (and thus the authors) of the Bible than it would be with the biblical audience or the historical background. In addition, the book is simply but clearly written with the language updated by Motyer, making it more accessible to a general audience. Basic terms, such as "grace" and "sanctification," are explained thoughtfully and thoroughly. In addition, Stott includes a number of colorful, visually attractive photographs, maps, charts, and boxed features. In order to accommodate a lay audience, he also divides the "Further reading" section at the end of each chapter into "Less demanding" and "More demanding, scholarly works."

With that said, there are some important things Stott could have included, but didn't. Because he is so singularly focused on the biblical authors, he says very little about the cultural setting of the New Testament. Any historical or cultural information that is given is somewhat related to an author. For example, Roman tax collection is explained in conjunction with Matthew, the tax collector. However, there is no general historical overview of the intertestamental period, which is extremely important in understanding the events of the New Testament and their significance.

Stott also avoids mentioning a number of significant academic theories in his work. For example, he simply says that most scholars believe Mark was written first with little explanation or evidence. Another example is the fact that only a passing reference is made to the longer ending of Mark. Considering the intended audience, limiting the presentation of obscure academic arguments is justifiable, but not to the exclusion of such significant contributions.

Overall, Stott has given us a good introductory text. Any lay person wanting to study the New Testament for the first time would do well to start here. Stott's book could also be used in a high school New Testament class, but it may not be challenging enough to be used as

lege or university text. While not intentionally designed for small group study, it could also be used in an adult discipleship class.

Jennifer Quast

rianne Meye Thompson, *The God of the Gospel of John*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001. 279 pp., paper, \$22.00.

In this study, Thompson endeavors to examine “the neglected factor in New Testament theology” (pp. 1-15), how the person and work of God is understood by the author of John. She provides a readable, interesting and important contribution by highlighting how John’s understanding of theology affected Johannine christology. In short, Thompson understands christology as a function of theology, rather than vice-versa.

The book is divided as follows. The first chapter discusses the meaning of “God” in John (pp. 17-55). Chapter two analyzes what is meant when the Johannine Jesus addresses God as “Father” (pp. 57-100). The third chapter analyzes the “Knowledge of God” (pp. 101-143). The fourth chapter discusses the “Spirit of God” (pp. 145-188). Finally, Thompson addresses the issue of the worship of God in the Johannine community (pp. 189-226). The conclusion (pp. 227-240) summarizes her findings.

Chapter one indicates that for first century Jewish writers “God” is not an abstract intellectual construct. Rather, God is understood in terms of the divine relationship with Israel. In that context, God establishes specific agents, such as Moses (Josephus and Philo), the “Logos” (Philo), or Melchizedek (11QMelchizedek), who share in God’s nature and work (see pp. 32-38). Likewise, in the christology of the NT in general and John in particular, Jesus enjoys a special status. “It is precisely the exercise of unique divine prerogatives that, when predicated of Jesus in John, lead to the harshest charges against him: in claiming to bestow life and to judge – two unique prerogatives of God – Jesus “makes himself equal to God” (p. 47). Yet, John’s portrayal of Jesus does not jeopardize monotheism. Rather, monotheism is affirmed, since God’s most basic attribute is to bestow life. This role is given to the Son (Jesus), who, upon of the resurrection, acts as God’s agent to bestow life (p. 55).

Chapter two examines the role of God as “Living Father” in both the Old Testament and Second Temple Judaism. A remarkable agreement is found in the conceptions of God as Father in these sources. In both, God is the source of life. John is unique in that “God’s activity in relationship to the Son is all-encompassing and comes to expression in statements regarding God’s life-giving powers and activity in past, present and future” (p. 69).

Because of God’s unique relationship with the Son, knowledge of God is mediated solely through the person of Jesus (see ch. 3, pp. 101-143). Jesus alone knows God, and alone transmits this knowledge of God. No one is said to “know God” in John except Jesus, and those to whom Jesus imparts such knowledge. Again, Thompson relates this understanding of knowledge of God to concepts within the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Judaism rather than any supposed gnostic redeemer myth.

The Father is also made known is through the Spirit or Paraclete. Thompson gives a thorough analysis of the problem of the relation of the Spirit and the Paraclete in John,



concluding that they are identical. Unlike other Johannine scholars (i.e. R.E. Brown), Thompson asserts that the Spirit-Paraclete is not a replacement for Jesus. Rather, the Spirit-Paraclete performs functions both of Jesus and the Father (see pp. 183-186). In short, Thompson adopts a theological rather than christological reading of the Spirit-Paraclete passages in John.

Finally, Thompson analyzes worship in the Gospel of John. Worship is to be in spirit and truth, both of which are revealed in and through Jesus. Jesus is not a replacement for temple (contra N.T. Wright), as much as a replacement for Moses. The polemic against "Jews" in John is that they do not know Jesus, who reveals the true worship of God, in "spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:23). This worship is what, in the view of the gospel writer, differentiates the Johannine community from the wider Jewish world which rejects Jesus.

Thompson makes an important contribution in emphasizing both the thoroughgoing theological nature of the Gospel of John, as well as its connections with Second Temple Jewish monotheism. Jesus is not a "second god" in John. Rather, he is in intimate relationship with the unique revealer of the Father. Her work needs to be taken seriously by any student of John concerned with the role of God in that Gospel.

Russell Morrell

Claus Westermann, *The Gospel of John in Light of the Old Testament*. Siegfried S. Schatzmann trans., Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998, 106pp.

Westermann's book is both intriguing and frustrating. It is intriguing to have such a high caliber Old Testament scholar bring his insights to such a multifaceted New Testament text. It is frustrating for the lack of footnotes and references. The serious student or scholar interested in pursuing his suggestions and lines of thought is left without help due to a lack of a bibliography, appendix or footnotes. The more general reader will be frustrated by the lack of explanation of his points.

The Introduction opens with some promise in which he suggests a reciprocal relationship between the testaments. He outlines in broad terms some points of contact regarding compositional style themes, and prophetic echoes from the Old Testament. Unfortunately his Introduction is exceptionally brief and doesn't really develop many of these ideas in succeeding sections of the book. On page 17 he tells us that "In the Gospel of John the conversation bears the same significance as in the Old Testament." He then moves on to his next point without explaining this statement. He assumes the reader already knows and understands the significance of conversation in the Old Testament. He assumes a consensus point of view on the subject that is already fully appreciated by the reader. He does not unpack his assertion for the edification of the reader. He does not seem to be aware that the reader may not have the prior knowledge to be able to really appreciate his point.

On page 19 he asserts in passing that the story of the vine and the branches is a "general critique of the understanding of community as found in the Acts of the Apostles, where everything depends upon human activity." This is hardly plausible. Even a cursory reading of Acts gives the reader a strong impression of the significance of the Holy Spirit. The day



cost is centered on the activity of the Holy Spirit. Ananias and Sapphira are struck down by the Holy Spirit, in acts 11 Agabus prophesies by the Spirit.

Chapter 3 which is the longest chapter is devoted to a review of the "controversy dialogues" (5:17-47, 6:25-65, 7:14-30 & 36, 8:12-59, and 10:22-39) Westermann spends the bulk of the chapter discussing the gnostic character of the controversy dialogues, rather than bringing the Old Testament relationship into focus. He states that the controversy dialogues "belong more to early church history than to the Gospel of John." (p.24) He makes this assertion with no reference to prior scholarship on John. Leaving the reader with no real information on which to evaluate the basis of his claim. In discussing the father / son motif he tells us that "the roots of the language lie in the Old Testament." He then fails to direct the reader where in the Old Testament these roots are and begin to suggest what the significance might be. This highlights a major weakness of the book that runs throughout. Just when he directs the reader to a core of intertextuality he fails to take the reader down the road and examine where and how the Old Testament impacts the New.

Chapter 4 is a very short discussion of the significance of the Old Testament for the Gospel of John. Unfortunately he gives just the most cursory review an affinity between Isaiah and John. He also mentions in passing some parallels between Jesus and the prophets. It would have been helpful to have him expand on these themes and the significance of the recording of conversations between individuals in both John and the Old Testament, instead just to leave the reader's appetite he moves on.

Relative to the rest of the book the Epilogue is rather long. It is a survey and critique of the perspectives of six major German New Testament scholars on their work on the Gospel of John (Bultmann, Kasemann, Bornkamm, Schotroff, Wengst and Thyen). The critiques are interesting, however they really add little to the book, as they seem somewhat out of place in a book that is supposed to be a discussion of the relationship between the Gospel of John and the Old Testament.

Overall the book is somewhat disappointing. As a short survey devoid of references, it is really not too helpful to either the general reader or scholar. The book presumes too much prior knowledge to help most general readers, and is too short on detail to really help the scholar or serious student.

C. Desmond Coles, Columbus, OH

W. L. White, *The Apostle of God: Paul and the Promise of Abraham*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999. xxxv + 277 pp., hardcover, \$24.95.

Professor White sets out to answer a perennial question: what happened that transformed Saul, the Pharisee and persecutor of Christians, into the radical follower of Jesus whom he believed to be the Messiah for the entire world? The answer put simply: White, a professor at Loyola University in Chicago, believes that Saul's personal vision (what he terms a "mystical experience") of the resurrected Jesus radically changed his idea of God. Rather than seeing him, God had vindicated Jesus in raising him from the dead. Consequently, Paul no longer viewed God primarily as lawgiver and judge but as the one who creates spiritual offspring

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(including "lawless" non-Jews) and brings them into the family of God.

White divides his treatise into three parts. In part one he surveys the major images and metaphors in each of Paul's letters. He concludes that Paul's metaphors point in one direct character of God as *creator*—which White believes is Paul's root metaphor for God. White's study of Paul's rhetorical processes in the letters confirms for him this underlying view of God as spiritual parent or Father. In part two White assesses how Greco-Roman ideas and political developments influenced Paul's view of God and his image of Christ. He surveys the concepts of divinity, cosmology, community, economics, universalism—given the Greco-Roman ruler and empire.

Part three consists of synthesizing chapters that draw conclusions for three crucial elements of Paul's theology: God as Father, Christ as Lord, and the church as God's family and people. This is a very fertile section that yields many illuminating insights. For example, White finds that Paul views God as the universal creator who displays his sovereignty as the fourfold (Father) of communal life, the providential sustainer of the social order, and the source of nature's order. White makes his case rather well, but I question that it is as open and shut as he makes it—that is, that the creator/Father motif dominates to the point of almost excluding other images. While demonstrating the crucial place in Paul's thinking for the image of God as creator and eager adopter of people into his family, White has not convinced me that this should displace other images or portrayals of God. The biblical writers strain to picture God in ways their readers could understand. So, for example, God is *both* judge *and* creator; for Paul, God's position as creator does not supplant his role as judge.

In discussing Christ as Lord (chapter 7) and the church as community (chapter 8) White provides many useful insights that help us understand Paul's words in light of the Greco-Roman cultural backdrop in which he wrote. Even apart from the rest of the book these prove to be useful summaries of Paul's understanding of these topics. Christ is Lord of God's Empire, head of the church and its priestly Lord. The church is the household of faith, consists of Abraham's offspring, and constitutes a heavenly city and divine empire.

A short epilogue concludes the book. It seeks to move interpreters of Paul away from limiting his emphasis to the doctrine of justification by faith. It is wrong, White contends, because Paul's language is more graphic and metaphorical than the abstraction of justification and because it overlooks Paul's new view of God as creator (rather than judge). White succeeded in showing crucial ways in which the Paul after his conversion differed from the typical Pharisee (and of the pre-conversion Saul). The book takes its place alongside others that rightfully question the centrality of "justification by faith" in Paul's theological system. While Paul may never have repudiated his phariseism, White shows that the abstract "justification" is not to capture the Christian Paul's theological heartbeat. But whether Paul completely abandoned the idea that God is judge as White seems to allege, I am not convinced.

William W. Klein, Denver Seminary, Denver, Colorado

David J. Williams, *Paul's Metaphors. Their Context and Character*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999. 432 pp., hardcover, \$24.95.

David Williams was, until his retirement, the Vice Principal of Ridley College, University of Melbourne, Australia. His book on Paul's metaphors is the culmination of research that flowed out of a series of lectures he had given twenty years earlier. There is every evidence of detailed research that adds to the value of the work. Williams draws from all of the relevant ancient sources to illuminate the metaphors that Paul has used in his writings. He covers such topics as life in the city, life in the country, family life, and warfare and soldiering. In all, 12 topics are investigated. Each topic is subdivided, so for example, life in the army is divided under subheadings of the army, tactics, warfare, laying siege, taking prisoners, signals and communications, watch, the soldier's armour, the soldier discipline and commitment and finally the soldier's pay. Each of the main themes receives similar treatment.

The insights that Williams brings through this study are fascinating as he seeks to relate ancient customs and practices to the teaching of Paul and so brings out meanings that would be hidden from the mind of the non specialist. The book is an invaluable source for students and teachers. It is well bound and has an excellent index system.

There is only one thing that concerns me. Williams follows the methods that have so long gone unchallenged until recent years. He turns too readily to Greek sources for explanations when there are not only viable explanations found from OT text, but in this reviewer's thinking, much more convincing ones. If the Hellenisation of the Gospel is taken for granted and there is the attempt to read the NT in the light of the Old, it not only distorts Biblical theology, but reinforces the liberal assumptions that Paul was the creator of a new religion that had only tenuous connections with the teaching of Jesus and the Old Testament.

Tom Holland, The Evangelical Theological College of Wales

David H. Young, *The Parables: Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation*, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998, 332 pp.

Young's investigation and analysis is both interesting and challenging. The introduction gives a solid overview of parables in general as teaching tools. Young also surveys the relationship between Jesus's parables and the broader context of Rabbinic Judaism. He makes extensive use of Jewish materials related to Second Temple Judaism including the Mishnah, Talmud, Dead Sea Scrolls, as well as the work of modern Jewish scholars and other major secondary sources. The general outline he follows in his exposition of the various parables is logical and helpful. He opens with a "focus" section describing the basic thrust or theme of each parable. He then generally surveys the history of Christian interpretation, followed by an analysis of the original setting in life with a comparison to Rabbinic parallels if applicable, or Jewish tradition in general before bringing us to his conclusions on a particular parable.

Young's analysis of the well known parable of the prodigal son is excellent, and he provides some very interesting background information not found in most commentaries on this parable. He notes that according to Middle Eastern culture and Jewish tradition the older son



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should act as a mediator in times of family crisis or dispute. This shines more light on the older son's shortcomings. When the younger asked for his portion of the inheritance, the older son had intervened and attempted to talk his brother out of such a shameful request. The older son's inappropriate silence would have been noted by the original audience. The older brother has the responsibility to shield his father from the hurt of such an impudent demand from the younger child. This type of additional information offered by Young shows that in this parable the older son is not merely less important third figure, but a significant actor in this mini drama, and one with some more subtle but significant shortcomings of his own. The original audience then would have perceived the older son as failing in his family role and showing a level of selfishness similar to but more subtle than that of his younger brother. By passively acquiescing to the division of the estate he demonstrates that he too is selfish and self centered only in a different way, thus the later protestations of obedience by the older brother would have had a rather hollow ring to the original audience. The older brother is actually portrayed as being quite emotionally distant from both his father and younger brother, yet the father remains gracious and accepting of him as well. Young's exposition of this parable thus adds greatly to our understanding of this well known parable. Young's use of relevant cultural clues and Jewish sources are a primary strength of this book. Young is not merely rehashing minutiae of linguistic analysis or seeking some novel source critical angle, he is adding valuable new insights to our understanding of the parables through extensive comparison with Jewish thought, theology and culture of the Second Temple period.

Young's interpretation of the perplexing parable of the unjust steward is very stimulating and it might be more controversial than his other expositions. He contends (following Flusser) that Jesus's reference to "sons of light" (Luke 16:8) is not a reference to his own followers but rather a reference to the Essenes at Qumran, thus the parable is an indictment against the Essene policy of total withdrawal from the surrounding society, refusal to interact with outsiders and their financial policies. A less controversial, but illuminating point that Young makes is with regard to the owner's commendation to the fired steward for his shrewd action in reducing the debtor's debt loads. Young indicates that we are looking at an honor and shame culture. Honor being the highest good that can be attained, more prized than even material wealth. The fired steward attained honor for the owner by means of the debt reduction. If the debtors were as yet unaware that the steward had been fired, they would have attributed the good fortune of their debt reduction to the generosity of the owner, and publicly praised his generosity to others in the community. The owner would gain favor and honor within the community. The owner would then be in an awkward position where he could not go back to the debtors and ask for the original debts, such action would garner resentment and lower the high esteem he had just achieved in the community. The steward's personally motivated actions thus gained some goodwill for both himself and his former employer. Even if one rejects the association of the "sons of light" with the Essenes, the illumination of the context in an honor and shame culture makes both the actions of the steward and the owner's response to his actions far more intelligible than they would otherwise be to a modern Western reader.

The above discussion selected only two parables to give a feel for his approach and contribution to the study of the parables, however his study adds valuable insights to all



bles he reviews. Overall Young's study of the parables is an excellent and stimulating contribution to the study of the parables and is well worth reading.

Christopher Coles

A. Carson, *New Testament Commentary Survey*. Grand Rapids: Baker, and Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2001. 144 pp., paper, \$12.99.

This is the fifth edition of a resource actually begun by Anthony Thistleton, but which Carson has been consistently revising and updating since the third edition in 1976. The present volume seems to cover resources through 1998 very well, with some representation of commentaries written in 1999 and 2000. The multiplication of commentaries and monographs on individual books of the New Testament, and the difficulty of discerning the wheat from the chaff, makes this book a valuable resource indeed -- a must read for the student or pastor who is building her or his library. Don Carson's expert guidance will save the beginner from many bad choices. Since the book, as a whole, represents one man's opinions, it would be valuable to check his suggestions against the recommendations of other professors or specialists, but Carson certainly provides all one needs to arrive at a "short list" of necessary resources and to be acquainted with the potential pitfalls and strengths of most books that a student might encounter in the course of researching an exegetical paper. This book is highly recommended.

David A. deSilva

R. Telford, *The Theology of the Gospel of Mark*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. 275 pp.

The Gospel of Mark, being the most analyzed and written about Gospel, stands as one of the key sources for early Christian tradition. Mark is the shortest of the Gospels and is generally understood by the majority of scholars as the earliest. Consequently, in recent years Mark has returned to the center as a key source for theology.

W. R. Telford, lecturer in Christian Origins and the New Testament at the University of New Castle in the United Kingdom, has provided a new volume to the excellent Biblical theology series published by Cambridge University, *New Testament Theology*. In it Telford has put together a thorough investigation and discussion concerning the Gospel of Mark's theology from the perspective of redaction criticism. It is important to note that this is not a comprehensive theology of Mark's Gospel. Telford acknowledges its limitations.

In the introduction, he says, "the principal method employed will be the historical-critical one (especially redaction criticism) but I shall draw upon the insights of the newer literary approaches where appropriate." The problem of this statement is that appropriate occasions for literary insights never seems to arise. While most literary critics make strides to acknowledge and often use the findings of historical-criticism within their methodology, this study never seriously considers any recent literary findings. In chapter two (pg. 147), Telford affirms the findings of recent literary studies which support his conclusion that the original ending for the

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Gospel of Mark was at 16:8. Yet following this conclusion, he raises the question as to why Gospel is left with a short ending and no post-resurrection appearances are included. The rest of the study is left wondering if there are any recent literary findings that may speak to the issue. At least to some limited extent. But Telford does not examine them.

Nevertheless, Telford has put together a thoughtful and helpful resource for scholars studying the Gospel of Mark. One of the greatest assets of this work is the bibliography and footnotes. Within them is a wealth of important scholarship. Anyone interested in Biblical studies and Theology will do well to read this book.

Andrew S. Hami

Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids/Carlisle: Eerdmans/Paternoster, 2000. xxxiii, 1446 pp., hardcover \$75.00.

At first, it appears incongruous that a professor of theology should write a commentary, especially in a series dedicated to the exegesis of the Greek New Testament. Anthony Thiselton, however, is also a distinguished NT scholar, whose works include several articles on 1 Corinthians, as well as several important books on hermeneutics. With a background in both New Testament and theology, Thiselton brings a wealth of learning to his commentary, including numerous excurses discussing important issues within the text, as well as the occasional exploration of *Wirkungsgeschichte*, or "post history" of the text (see especially pp. 276-286, 1306-1313). Especially insightful are references to the Church Fathers, particularly John Chrysostom, as well as allusions to the thoughts of the Reformers.

Yet, Thiselton does not simply review the past. He is well aware of the current trends in interpreting 1 Corinthians, including rhetorical criticism. He is especially indebted to the work of Margaret M. Mitchell (*Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation* [Tubingen: Mohr, 1991]), as well as commentaries by Hayes, Fee, Barrett, etc. While he is open to rhetorical criticism, Thiselton is also aware of the limitations of the methodology, which he outlines in his introduction (pp. 52). He also, correctly, follows the lead of Mitchell and others who accept the unity and integrity of 1 Corinthians, rejecting theories that 1 Corinthians is a composite document made up of fragments of several letters.

Thiselton understands, with Mitchell, that one of the primary themes of 1 Corinthians is the issue of unity. Paul reverses the standards of the dominant culture, which Thiselton in places inaccurately labels as "secular," where "honor" amounts to self-aggrandizement. Rather, the Corinthians are called upon to reject factionalism and self-seeking. As a result, in his discussion of 1 Corinthians 12-14, Thiselton, as opposed to Fee, sees the primary emphasis of the discussion of the gifts as being an exhortation to unity, rather than a call to recognize diversity. While his views on certain gifts, particularly tongues, will not be acceptable to all, particularly Pentecostal believers, the focus on Paul's imagery as stressing the unity of the church is helpful.

While the book has much to contribute, there are some features that detract from its overall usefulness. The first is, in line with a number of other commentaries published in the last decade, its imposing length. Thiselton at times seems so anxious to discuss every opinion

oversial points that the reader is bogged down in a mass of detail. On manifestation of this  
ncy is the citation of works that are now dated, such as Grimm-Thayer, even when these  
es do contribute substantially to the discussion and a reference to BAGD would suffice.

More troubling, however, is the inordinate number of misprints. These are especially  
inent in the misspellings of German, Greek and Hebrew words, as well as incorrect spellings  
umes. Furthermore, on pp. 810-848, the footnote numbers at the bottom of the page do not  
espond to the numbers in the text. It is to be hoped that later editions will correct these  
blems.

Yet, despite these caveats, for the reader who is willing to sift through a mass of detail,  
elton has written an important and useful commentary. If one has the time and patience to  
t through the details, much may be learned.

Russell Morton

William M. Ramsey, *Historical Commentary on Galatians*. Edited by Mark Wilson. Grand  
ids: Kregel, 1997. 366 pp., paper, \$14.99.

This revised edition makes Ramsey's classic work on Galatians newly available in  
tern typeset, with updated geographical references, use of the reference system of the Loeb  
sical Library where applicable, and the like. The first half of the book (originally the second  
, in Ramsey's organization of the whole) presents the "commentary," which is more like a  
es of notes or excurses on specific topics in the interpretation of Galatians. The second half  
ents a detailed discussion of the history and peoples of Galatia.

David A. deSilva

Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998.  
pp., hardcover, \$69.95.

Bring together the name Ernest Best and the International Critical Commentary Series  
T&T Clark and you can be sure that you are going to be treated to the very best in scholarship,  
that is what is realised in this Commentary on Ephesians. The choice of scholar was natural,  
Best began his post graduate theological research with a thesis on Paul's understanding of  
at being 'in' and 'with' Christ means. Unless that basic concept is clear it is impossible to  
er into the theology of St Paul and it is of course a key term in the letter to the Ephesians.  
spite this connection, Best questions Pauline authorship.

The exegesis is detailed and thorough. It is judicious in weighing the evidence and  
re are all the marks of the most careful scholarship from a man from whom we would expect  
less. Within this welter of detailed information are the occasional pastoral insights, when for  
mple, Best notes the nature of Paul's praying when commenting on his request for prayer. He  
not asking for personal deliverance, but that he might be kept faithful to his calling to make  
rist known.

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The work is based on the Greek text, which is essential for a work of such a standard. However, it is a pity that the publishers have not been able to accommodate some concessions for the non Greek reader such as the Word Commentary series has, for if they had done, I would imagine the series would have a much wider readership outside of the academic community. The work is accompanied by the same high standard of indexing for authors, subjects and texts, as is common with the ICC series.

The only negative comment that this reviewer would give is that Best deals with the letter as though it is written about the experience of individuals, hence his discussion on what sealing of the Spirit means in 1:13. He follows the well-worn path of relating the text to individual Christian experience when the letter is to the church and its theology is about the church. Such facts, I would suggest, ought to make us ask the question whether the theologian dealing primarily with the community's experience, and secondary with the individual's experience, normally dealt with in the instruction sections to groups of people, i.e. fathers, children, masters etc. Such a refocusing of the hermeneutical principle will bring to the surface thought patterns and hence a theological depth that Best's approach, in this reviewer's opinion, has failed to observe.

Tom Holland, *The Evangelical Theological Society*

Gordon Fee, *Philippians*. InterVarsity Press, 1999, 204 pp., \$17.99.

The outstanding exegete and New Testament scholar Gordon Fee has produced a gem in his IVP commentary on Philippians. This is an illustrious volume in the InterVarsity Press New Testament Commentary Series and a major resource for pastors, students and Bible study leaders. The series focuses on contemporary relevance, solid biblical exposition and a user-friendly format.

Dr. Fee replaced F.F. Bruce as editor of the esteemed New International Commentary series. In that series he authored the commentary on Philippians. However, this latest commentary on Philippians is not just a smaller version of the larger one. The exposition is "lightened up" and the many footnotes of the larger volume have been almost eliminated.

The commentary views Philippians as an ancient letter written in the style of first century letters. Throughout it is based on a mutual friendship between author and recipients. It is neither bombastic nor caustic. The setting is carefully placed in the Greco-Roman world of the first century Philippi. The letter deals gently with external opposition and internal unrest facing the Christians at Philippi. These are incipient in form and thus not catastrophic but in need of corrective exhortation to avoid future demise.

The passage by passage commentary contains friendly exhortation, encouragement facing opposition and suffering while partnering in the gospel, rejoicing in Christ Jesus and standing firm in the Spirit.

Richard E. Allison



Am J. Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*. Anchor Bible 32B. New York: Doubleday, 2000. xx + 508 pp., \$50.00.

A. J. Malherbe has contributed much to our understanding of the Greco-Roman legalists and the importance of these philosophical-ethical traditions for our reading of Paul's letters. A commentary on Thessalonians from this distinguished scholar, who has already written several ground-breaking monographs on the Thessalonian epistles, is therefore a welcome source. The volume includes a new translation of the epistles, an introduction to each letter, notes on specific or technical issues in the text, and "comment" sections in which the meaning of the text, enriched by the discussions in the notes, is brought to bear on the pastoral exigencies of Thessalonian Christians.

A striking feature of the commentary is Malherbe's decision to treat 2 Thessalonians as a genuine letter of Paul, addressed to the congregation just a brief while after 1 Thessalonians. It has become fashionable in scholarship to group 2 Thessalonians with "Deutero-Pauline" letters, and so the arguments posed to the contrary by a distinguished scholar are bound to have important reverberations in treatments of Pauline letters — and the tendency to give 2 Thessalonians a secondary place in studies of Paul's theology and ethics — in the decades to come.

Particular strengths of this commentary include Malherbe's sensitivity to the epistolary conventions of Paul's time and the epistolary types that provide a framework for how Paul's letters would have been heard. An even more noteworthy feature is the wealth of Greco-Roman literature brought to bear on Thessalonians as Malherbe scours that all-too-often neglected background for comparative texts that illumine both the world of the addressees and the language and arguments of Paul. Malherbe's own deep involvement with popular philosophical movements in the first-century may occasionally lead him to prefer an interpretation with which this review would disagree, for example reading Paul's censure of the people who say "peace and security" (1 Thess 5:3) as directed against the Epicurean quest for "security" in retirement from public involvement as opposed to the more obvious and ubiquitous Roman imperial propaganda. Nevertheless, Malherbe presents the options fairly, which will allow each reader to ponder the options and decide for herself or himself whether or not to follow Malherbe's conclusions.

Much to the chagrin of its primary readership, the Anchor Bible volumes are becoming steadily expensive, particularly when compared to the costs of other critical, hardcover series. Nevertheless, this particular volume is worth strong consideration for the pastor's and scholar's library.

David A. deSilva

Lin G. Kruse, *The Letters of John*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000, 255 pp., hardcover, \$8.00.

Lin Kruse, lecturer in New Testament at Bible College of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia, has made a major contribution in his commentary on the letters of John. His work is a volume in the Pillar New Testament Commentary series by Wm. B.

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Eerdmans. The Pillar series is published for teachers, pastors and students. Emphases are on clarifying the meaning of the text, interaction with informed contemporary debate and avoidance of an overabundance of undue technical detail.

Exegesis of original languages by the author is evident but a working knowledge on the part of the reader is not essential. Exposition is accomplished with pastoral sensitivity and theological awareness. Kruse provides excellent exposition, a treatment of introductory matters and historical context in addition to exploring authorship, purpose, audience and theological themes. He assumes a close relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the letters of John.

The two principle concerns of the literature as identified by Kruse are assurance of the believers and the secessionists. The secessionists circulated among the churches propagating beliefs contrary to the authors teaching confusing the believers. At issue, were the doctrines of the humanity of Jesus, the atonement, the role of the Spirit, the meaning of koinonia and eternal life.

The author's exposition is clear, balanced, insightful and edifying. Solidly based on a knowledge of the Greek text, the commentary carefully provides a verse-by-verse exposition of each letter. At a difficult time in the history of the early church, Kruse perceptively expounds the apostolic defense of orthodox belief. This volume is an invaluable, lucid resource for a study of the letters for pastors, teachers and serious students.

Richard E. Allis

R. H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (revised). NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. xxxvi + 439 pp., hardcover, \$44.00.

Mounce's 1977 commentary on Revelation was rightly lauded as a new benchmark of scholarship on this elusive text. He provided a thorough explanation of the text in light of Jewish use of the Old Testament, interaction with contemporary phenomena of the Roman empire and the province of Asia, and other essential features of historical-critical interpretation. In his revised edition, Mounce has updated the bibliography fairly well through 1993, with a few works from after that date. He has modified his own position on recapitulation somewhat, and retains his premillennial orientation. It remains in many ways, however, a 1977 commentary. More recent work in social scientific criticism, or the application of sociology of religion and sociology of knowledge theories to the interpretation of Revelation, have not impacted Mounce's commentary. Mounce's reflections on Revelation as "apocalypse" tend to be limited to formal features of the genre rather than extending to models of how apocalypses shape the hearers'/readers' perception of their worlds and motivate them to function within it. All this to say that Mounce's commentary is as good, if not better, than it was in 1977, but has not moved appreciably forward from that point in terms of interpretational paradigms.

David A. deSilva

Harold L. Thompson, *Revelation*. Abingdon New Testament Commentaries. Nashville: Abingdon, 1998. 207 pp., paper, \$22.00.

The purpose of the Abingdon New Testament Commentaries is to provide "compact, practical commentaries on the writings of the New Testament" (p. 9), geared toward upper level college and university students, as well as pastors and other church leaders. When writing such a commentary, especially on the Apocalypse, writers face two temptations. Either they may write a commentary that is excessively detailed and esoteric, or, in the effort to communicate clearly they may write a simplistic commentary. Thompson avoids both of these pitfalls, and in the process provides a lucid, informative commentary, which will be most helpful to the lay reader or pastor. The bibliography (pp. 191-197), while not extensive, provides the reader with a solid foundation. Some of the most important secondary literature on the Apocalypse.

Thompson takes both the message and background of Revelation seriously. The reader is treated to a wealth of parallels from the OT, early Jewish writings, including apocalypses, Greco-Roman parallels, and rabbinic writers. His discussion of Rev. 4-5 (pp. 88-100), the beasts in Rev. 12-13 (pp. 131-143), and the New Jerusalem in Rev. 21:1-22:5 (pp. 180-190) are particularly strong. The reader is reminded that all Christians contemporary to John (pp. 174-175) did not necessarily share John's vision of Rome. John's message of hope and confidence in God is also emphasized (pp. 189-190).

Thompson's outline of Revelation is, perhaps, his weakest point. He follows a conventional pattern of seeing Revelation as consisting of seven parts, consisting of Rev. 1:9-2:2; 4:1-8:1; 8:2-11:19; 12:1-14:20; 15:1-16:21; 17:1-19:10; 19:11-22:5. The seven-fold structure is introduced by an epistolary introduction (1:1-8) and concluded with a final assertion of confidence in God and the Lamb in 22:6-21. While this structuring may be helpful, the reader should also be aware that Revelation consists of numerous ring structures, where the reader is reminded of what has occurred earlier in the text. These are particularly prominent in common language found in Rev. 4-5 and 19:1-10, as well as Rev. 2-3 and 21-22. In short, Revelation has an interlocking structure, which is not well reflected in Thompson's analysis.

Thompson's locates the message of Revelation within the late first century. This fact, along with parallels to Greco-Roman writers and Jewish-Christian tradition, should also warn readers to avoid misusing John's vision as a roadmap to the future. Rather, John's message is a warning against compromise with Rome. From reading this commentary, readers may be encouraged to speculate in what ways current western and American culture, like Rome, are hostile to the claims of the Gospel. For example, what would be John's response to our own compromises with consumerism would be in light of the condemnation of Rome's economy in Rev. 18 (pp. 166-172)?

One final caveat may be needed. The average reader will need to keep the text of Revelation handy when reading the commentary. Thompson's discussions are often brief to the point of abrupt, and the reader who lacks knowledge of the context of Revelation or the ancient world could easily be lost. Nevertheless, Thompson has provided an excellent resource to introduce non-specialists to the Revelation of John. It can be used with profit by pastors and laity, as well as teachers of undergraduates. Readers exposed primarily to popular approaches to John's



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visions will be challenged, and may need to re-evaluate their positions. As such, the book provides a valuable service.

Russell Moore

A. K. A. Adam, ed. *Handbook of Postmodern Biblical Interpretation*. St. Louis, Mo.: Chalice Press, 2000.

A. K. A. Adam, ed. *Postmodern Interpretations of the Bible – A Reader*. St. Louis, Mo.: Chalice Press, 2001.

"Postmodernism," Richard Rorty is alleged to have quipped, "is a word that pretends to stand for an idea." The perspicuity of Rorty's definition notwithstanding, "postmodernism" is notoriously slippery term. Depending on who wields it, the word may, for example, serve as a catch-all for trends in popular culture, represent an amalgam of inscrutable ideas of interest only to academics, or signify a philosophical *bête noire* that threatens the end of Western civilization and life as we know it. Whether the two books under review here will reinforce or counter any of these or other ideas will of course be up to the reader. In any case the interested reader will find in them a readable, provocative, and most welcome portal into postmodern thinking, in the first case (and in the words of the editor) by "talking about postmodernism" and in the second by "talking postmodern-ly."

While the title of the first book is straightforward, its referent is devious. The table of contents gives it the look of a "handbook," promising (as one has come to expect from such things) a concise but complete capsule of every entry in turn. The topics listed include people prominent in postmodern discourse (e.g. Bakhtin, Derrida, Lyotard), as well as themes (e.g. deconstruction, intertextuality, postcolonialism) and postmodern treatments of conventional topics (e.g. historiography, scholarship, truth). Reading through the entries, however, becomes a messy business, for it soon becomes apparent that the entries are not self-contained. A discussion of "postcolonialism," for instance, spills over the margins of its own entry and pops up again within titles such as "identity," "sexuality," and "translation" and in the context of summaries of such figures as Derrida and Lyotard. Voices and topics appear, disappear, and reappear in different combinations and discourses, resisting the sense that anything has been "fully covered."

In a similar fashion the contents of the first book exceed the promise of the title. The entries not only concern themselves with what "postmodern interpretation" looks like but also deal with aspects of contemporary thought that have influenced its development. There are no "postmodern interpreters" of the Bible among the personages addressed. Rather, the reader is introduced to figures whose thought has influenced the way that biblical interpretation is being recast (though few of those addressed have themselves engaged in the practice). Because it does more than address biblical interpretation, this volume is an excellent resource for anyone seeking a substantive engagement with postmodern thought.

The contributors to the second volume take up (directly or indirectly) many of the strains of postmodern thought introduced in the first. The readings presented here offer



findings into the whole of the canon and provide accessible exemplars of postmodern interpretation in practice. They demonstrate both the diversity of perspectives offered by postmodern discourse and the rich benefits to be gained by viewing the biblical text through other lenses.

I recommend these books not only to those who are interested in exploring a new hermeneutic but also to anyone who is interested in getting past the "word that pretends to stand for an idea." As such, I believe they will become an indispensable resource for both the newcomer and the seasoned veteran. I, for one, shall return to them often.

L. Daniel Hawk

Guinness, *Time For Truth: Living Free in a World of Lies, Hype and Spin*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2000. 128 pp., paper, \$10.99.

In 1973, Os Guinness' first book and now classic *The Dust of Death* was published. The breadth of this book astounded many of us. Guinness had managed to analyze Western culture through the 1960's from a Christian perspective in a way that was profound, comprehensive, and quite understandable to those of us living in the midst of that turbulent era. He wrote from first-hand experience quoting directly from the voices of that era. Since then he has been one of the West's clearest voices in providing cultural analysis through Christian lenses. Now he has taken on the monumental task of summarizing and critiquing Post-modernism in the book *Time for Truth*.

Guinness describes how people have been deceived into thinking that the dismantling of truth and the loss of all meaningful and traditional moral distinctions in the West will usher in a New World of "greater enlightenment and freedom." In response to this loss, he describes his purpose to warn the West against what will be the "death knell of Western civilization in general and the American experiment in particular." This is because it amounts "to a profound crisis of cultural authority in the West—a crisis in the beliefs, traditions, and ideals that have been decisive for Western civilization to this point"(13).

Guinness admits that this small book (only 125 pages) is not a comprehensive study of postmodernism, but his work is quite broad and foundational. The first two chapters examine how the loss of truth has effected the crises in ethics and in character. He cites the loss of principled ethics, the preference of social ethics to personal ethics, and the superficial view of evil. He quotes Karl Menninger's analysis of sin being defined down to crime and then eventually sickness. Guinness has a helpful summary of how Nietzsche's view of power has become central to postmodernism. He also shows the character of postmodern ethics in the way the Nobel prize was awarded in 1992 to Rigoberta Menchu, even though much of the writing was not factual but fictional. This development has created a culture of "spinmeisters". He also uses such examples as Samuel Clemens' creation of his alter ego, Mark Twain, as an example of someone who "created himself" in the manner that has become popular for all twenty-first century image-builders. Image has established itself as more important than character.

His third chapter looks at postmodernism's impact on America at the national and global levels. Guinness discusses political correctness, "lawyered truth", and the loss of a center

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in Western thought. He describes how Clinton became the first postmodern president, followed by a very insightful section on the seven habits of postmodernist lying. In chapter four he shifts building support for a Christian view of truth and begins by comparing Primo Levi's suicide to the Christian witness of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. Guinness writes, "Levi's view of truth left a weary Sisyphus with a hopeless task, Solzhenitsyn's made him a sword in God's hand, allowed him to raise a voice to rally the world" (75). He then lays forth two arguments for a high view of truth and argues that truth must be the basis of freedom. Guinness states, "Truth without freedom is a manacle, but freedom without truth is a mirage" (87). In the last chapters he presents strategies for responding to those who reject truth and at the difficulties of one who attempts to live out truth. He uses the method of Francis Schaeffer by demonstrating how postmodernism and relativism clash with reality and cannot really be lived out. Guinness argues that the holocaust teaches us the reality of true evil and that "when we come face to face with raw, naked evil, then relativism, nonjudgmentalism, and atheism count for nothing. Absolute evil calls for absolute judgment" (103). How much more are we aware of this in the light of the events of September 11!

Guinness aptly performs the role of apologist, and continues as one of Christendom's foremost cultural critics. Christian truth stands directly in conflict with postmodernism. Guinness recognizes that we cannot simply replace the postmodern with a return to the modern. They are equally faulty. This is a watershed moment and we must choose the third way, the Christian view of truth, in opposition to both the modern Enlightenment view of truth and the postmodern deconstruction of truth. Those of us who desire to reconstruct society must realize the nature of those ideas that must be deconstructed first. Postmodernism is at the core of this effort.

This is a serious topic for those who want to understand the implications of the loss of truth. Guinness writes "For the lies of Western society—particularly as they are compounded by the 'culture cartel' of postmodern academia, advertising, entertainment, and youth culture—more seductive and enduring than those of communist society" (19). This writer has read numerous summaries and critiques of postmodernism and if I were to recommend just one book to explain what postmodernism is, its historic roots and developments, and how Christians should approach this non-worldview world view, then it would be to read and study *Time for Truth*.

Mark Hamilton, Ashland University

*Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited by Walter A. Elwell. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2001. 1312 pp., hardcover, \$49.99.

This tome is the second edition of a widely and well-received dictionary in the 1980s which itself was designed to succeed *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, published in 1960. The editor is Walter Elwell, a professor at Wheaton College Graduate School. The goal that Baker set out for this book in its first edition, according to the preface, was "to construct a one-volume reference work on theology that was both up to date and academically accurate, yet accessible to the average layperson" (p. 5). The main differences between the first and second editions are the addition of about 215 new articles and the deletion of about 100 others, along with the inclusion

articles about theologians who are still living, not all of whom might comfortably be considered evangelical.

This caught my attention, so I read the articles on two such theologians. Both were written by R.A. Peterson, and both give a fair and honest account of the contributions of Sallie Krawcheck and Rosemary Radford Ruether to the work of theology today. What impressed me about both is that Peterson chose to conclude each article with a few words about what evangelicals can learn from such theologians, as well as what evangelicals need to be concerned about with respect to their work.

There are four pages listing contributors, among whom are several "big" names, such as Geoffrey Bromiley, J.I. Packer and the late F.F. Bruce, as well (gratifyingly for some) as a few Canadians, such as Ian Rennie and the late Stanford Reid (both Canadian Presbyterians).

Each article is written in a very readable fashion, with a length that in most cases is easily digestible. Cross-references are provided toward other articles that may be of interest to the reader, and a bibliography is provided, listing a short variety of books which presumably were consulted in the writing of the article.

There were a few areas, such as in the articles on "Church Government" and "Church Officers", where I believe that a more accurate definition could have been given had the various sections of the articles been separated as individual articles, and written by those within each tradition. For example, it might have been more helpful had an Anglican written the section on episcopal church government, a Presbyterian on Presbyterianism, and someone from the Congregationalist tradition on Congregationalism. Likewise, if each office peculiar to a particular tradition had been written about by one from that tradition, there might have been fewer picayune errors.

On the whole, however, this book is a valuable contribution to the continuing life and health of the Christian church, and particularly its evangelical witness. It is a very heavy volume, and readers are advised to keep it on a lower shelf or on a table. It would make an excellent reference volume for the church library, the pastor's study, or the lay person's bookshelf. As the author states in the preface, "If this volume informs you intellectually, strengthens you spiritually, challenges you personally, or deepens your walk with the Lord, we will have achieved our purpose" (p. 5). I believe that the purpose has been achieved.

Jeffrey Loach

Harold J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998, 1312 pp..

This work is a revision of the author's *Christian Theology*, first published in 1983, which has become a standard text in seminary systematic theology classes. The overall plan of the book and much of the content remain the same. Erickson has updated the discussion to reflect the changing theological landscape. This updating is especially evident in the hermeneutics section, which contains a new chapter on postmodernism and new sections on deconstruction (chapter 2), structuralism and reader-response interpretation (chapter 4), and speech-act theory (chapter 6). In his chapter on theological method, Erickson has inserted a new chapter, which he calls "consultation of other cultural perspectives" (pages 74-75). In the course of



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the book, he responds to some other recent texts, such as Stanley J. Grenz's *Theology for Community of God* (pages 1044n17 and 1045n19). He also refers briefly to the views of other theists (pages 307 and 386n13).

The book's clear presentation and its usefulness in teaching have always been among its strengths. In this edition, Erickson has enhanced its usefulness to teachers by adding objective chapter summaries, chapter outlines, and study questions to the beginning of each chapter. Before, the extensive Scripture and subject indexes make the text very useful as a reference. Despite its length, the hardcover printing is very reader-friendly, with a good binding, attractive layout, clear headings, and a readable font.

Other strengths of Erickson's volume include his careful descriptions of opposing viewpoints and the irenic tone he maintains throughout. In light of this general thoughtfulness, it is unfortunate that he has chosen not to revise his statement that Arminianism is based "in part upon [God's] foreknowledge of merit and faith in the person elected" (page 852 in the revised edition, 835 in the original; emphasis mine). Arminian theologians do not argue that salvation is based on human merit, even in part. Erickson's discussion of Arminianism in general would be improved if he addressed the Arminian view of corporate election, which reflects Arminius' own perspective and has broader acceptance among evangelical Arminian theologians today than does the election of individuals based on God's foreknowledge of their response.

Nevertheless, this update ensures that Erickson's text will continue to be a popular choice for evangelical seminaries looking for a moderately Reformed text in systematic theology. Readers of all theological persuasions will continue to benefit from Erickson's careful discussion of the issues, even if they ultimately disagree with his conclusions.

Brenda B. Collins

James Leo Garrett, Jr., *Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, & Evangelical*, Volume 2. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. 872 pp. (Out of print.)

In this second volume, James Leo Garrett brings to a conclusion the systematic theology begun in his first volume, published in 1990. Volume two begins with the work of Christ, continues with the Holy Spirit and salvation, and concludes with the church and last things. His method, described in the subtitle of the volume, remains the same as in his first volume. In each chapter, after a brief introduction, he discusses Old and New Testament data, surveys the history of the doctrine, and provides a systematic formulation. His discussion follows an outline format.

As his subtitle indicates, Garrett takes an evangelical approach to his topics, flavored with a nonsectarian Baptist perspective. He affirms universal atonement and perseverance (which he prefers to call "abiding in Christ"), but he sidesteps some of the usual Calvinist/Arminian debates. His discussion of election tends toward a Reformed view, although with some tentativeness. He comes to no conclusion on whether we should identify and order the decrees of God (p. 447-448). On the question of whether election is of individuals or of a people, he concludes, "Inasmuch as we become Christians as individuals even as we are made to belong to the family or the people or the church of God, it would seem impossible as well as undesirable



empt a total dissociation of election and individual destiny. What is called for is a proper balance between the collective and the individual" (p. 454). He does not attempt to delineate that balance. His treatment of spiritual gifts is non-Pentecostal but open to the validity of all spiritual gifts today. On church order, he discusses various issues of interest to Baptists but advocates no particular polity.

One of the strengths of his volume lies in its inclusion of topics not usually covered in systematic theology texts. For example, his discussion of sanctification includes chapters on spiritual disciplines, stewardship, and prayer. His discussion of the church includes a discussion of worship in various traditions and in the contemporary church. The section on the church also includes a chapter on church, state, and society, as well as a discussion of church discipline. His inclusion of practical topics helps to avoid a split, all too common in theology texts, between theology and ethics.

The great strengths of Garrett's work are its thoroughness of coverage, its copiousness, and its breadth of perspective, especially its inclusion of various theological traditions in each topic. The methodology of moving from biblical data to historical development to systematic formulation is excellent. This approach benefits from Garrett's encyclopedic knowledge of historical theology. The volume contains thorough Scripture and author indexes, but its subject index is disappointingly meager. The book's outline format partly makes up for this weakness.

Oddly, however, for such a long work of systematic theology, it actually seems to contain very little systematic theology, as such. In his systematic sections, Garrett surveys other theologians, often with little synthesis of his own. For example, in his discussion of the extent of atonement, Garrett reviews the historical development of various positions and then summarizes theologians' arguments in favor of particular atonement and in favor of general atonement. After citing Donald Bloesch's and Millard Erickson's comments in favor of universal atonement, Garrett concludes by saying simply, "These arguments seem persuasive" (p. 65).

Similarly, his chapter on justification consists of a short discussion of Old and New Testament concepts, a long survey of the history of the doctrine, and a "systematic conclusion" of one paragraph. This paragraph does draw brief conclusions, stating that justification should be seen as declarative, and faith is the condition rather than the grounds of justification (p. 276), but does not attempt to flesh out or even support his conclusions.

In some chapters, Garrett simply juxtaposes contrasting or contradictory opinions without comment. The reader is sometimes left wondering what Garrett himself believes about the topic in question. For example, in his systematic formulation of conversion he raises questions about whether conversion is a work of God or a work of human beings, whether we could affirm a strict *ordo salutis*, and whether conversion is once-for-all or repeatable. Although he summarizes theologians on different sides of these questions, he offers no opinions or conclusions himself.

With all its virtues, Garrett's *Systematic Theology* remains an encyclopedic prologue to systematic theology rather than a fully developed systematic theology in its own right. For this reason, it would not make a very good stand-alone text for theology courses. Furthermore, the awkward separation between the person of Christ in volume one and the work of Christ in volume two could create problems for seminaries who divide their sequence of courses at a

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different point. Students might also find the dense discussion and outline format rather than a more accessible reading. Since the publisher has allowed the work to go out of print, this issue is a moot point for the present.

Nevertheless, for those who can find copies through used or out-of-print bookstores, this volume would be an excellent reference work for teachers, advanced students, and pastors. Its survey of biblical and historical material would provide a solid foundation for lectures, papers, and sermons.

Brenda B. Collier

Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994. Reprint Grand Rapids and Vancouver: Eerdmans and Regent College Publishing, 2000, 691 pp.

This volume is a reprint of Grenz's theology text published in 1994 by Broadman and Holman, which recently allowed it to go out of print. I reviewed the original volume in the 1995 issue of this journal. The reprint, a joint venture by Eerdmans and Regent College, is a paperback rather than the original hardcover. The content is identical to the original, and the same indexes (subject, name, Scripture) are included. The only changes in the text appear to be the correction of a number of typographical errors that appeared in the Broadman volume.

A few changes have been made to the presentation of the book, with mixed results. The use of a smaller, lighter type font shortens the book from its original 890 pages to 691 pages (Unfortunately, for anyone who has developed lecture notes around the text, this means that it has been repaginated.) Pages are more dense and less easy to read than the original, which makes the text less student-friendly. However, the outlines at the beginning of each chapter have been moved to a detailed 24-page table of contents, giving students a clearer guide to the book's overall organization and enabling them to navigate through the book more easily. The improved formatting of chapter subheadings provides a clearer guide to the organization within each chapter.

Grenz's text is still an excellent synthesis of systematic theology around the theme of the church community, a solidly evangelical treatment that interacts profitably with contemporary thought. Professors of theology who want a broadly evangelical (or non-Calvinist Baptist) theology text will be glad to see this work back in print.

Brenda B. Collier

John H. Leith, Charles E. Raynal, eds., *Pilgrimage of a Presbyterian: Collected Short Writings*, Geneva Press, 2001.

John Leith, noted professor at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, has long been a respected voice in the Presbyterian Church (USA). His many books, including "An Introduction to the Reformed Tradition" have been valued for years. One who reads his books recognizes that his purpose is to state theology in understandable language. His manner is forthright and direct.

h, in his classes often quoted Reinhold Niebuhr's words: "At any rate I swear that I will never be to be a preacher of pretty sermons." Without a lot of pomp and circumstance, Leith both preached and taught with a grasp of the confessional heritage for the Reformed tradition and with a solid basis of biblical understanding.

Leith himself, when approached about this book compiling his 'shorter writings', wondered if his major works contained most or all of what would be included in this collection. The reader will agree that there is something interesting and unique in these collected sermons and writings. For one, they are in direct response to controversies and challenges that have faced Presbyterians since the forties. Many are quite interesting, although in the spirit of Leith, they are 'pretty'! The writings reflect a serious and often conflicted voice in relationship to his denomination. Leith describes his theological position as 'critically orthodox.' Some of the sermons are classic looks at major tenets of the reformed faith such as predestination and the perseverance of the saints. The book includes sermons, lectures, photographs and a complete bibliography of Leith's writings.

Cliff Stewart

Donald K. McKim, *Introducing the Reformed Faith: Biblical Revelation, Christian Tradition, Contemporary Significance*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. 261 pp., paper, \$7.95.

The name 'Donald McKim' has become synonymous with 'accessible reference works in the Reformed tradition' in Presbyterian circles in North America. If you look on the shelf of any Canadian or American Presbyterian pastor, you will probably find at least a couple of books written or edited by McKim. With *Introducing the Reformed Faith*, he has not let us down. This is one of the most readable and commendable books on the Reformed tradition that I have ever read. Were I not Presbyterian myself, reading this book would make me think very seriously about becoming one! The book helps to make clear that, as McKim states in the introduction, "The Reformed faith is a faith of *living people*" (emphasis his).

There are nineteen chapters in this volume, the first sixteen of which deal with major topics of interest in the Reformed tradition. It is, in many ways, laid out like a systematic theology, beginning with Scripture and ending with the end times. McKim opens the book with suggested ways to use it, either as a study for an individual or for groups. He also suggests that one could read only the text, or the text and the endnotes. The endnotes are somewhat voluminous in themselves (50 pages of somewhat fine print), but give insights that, for many readers, are helpful. These include word origins, quotations from scholars, historical notes, and quotations that help to clarify the points he makes in the book. That being said, one could read only the text itself and still be greatly edified.

Each chapter is laid out just as the subtitle of the book states: biblical revelation, Christian tradition, contemporary significance. As part of the "Christian tradition" section, each chapter has a "Reformed emphases" subheading, in which McKim makes clear where Christians in the Reformed tradition tend to stand on the matter being discussed. Here, he often will cite a creed or statement of faith from the Reformed tradition. He is careful to note that there is not



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unanimity among Reformed believers on all matters, and he explains, where appropriate, why some of the different opinions are among the various strands of the Reformed tradition. Each chapter concludes with "Questions for reflection", which are useful both for group and individual study.

McKim uses a number of "big" words, which he defines well, making the book accessible to anyone with a secondary school education. He is very committed to the use of inclusive language, which sometimes makes the grammar awkward. Many of his illustrations are from his own experience in the United States, which do not always resonate with a Canadian reader (for instance, the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy in the 1920s was highlighted more than the Scopes trial!) Still, I would not hesitate to hand this book to an informed seeker who desires to learn more about the Reformed tradition, provided the seeker would sit down and discuss each chapter with me as she or he read. If one has spent one's whole life in a different theological or ecclesiastical tradition, reading this book all at once, without an opportunity for verbal reflection, could be somewhat overbearing.

Some might suggest that in this relatively small book, McKim has attempted to conciliate Rome. True, he aims high, and covers all of his bases quite well. The only pitfall I noticed in this midst of this was the common problem of glossing over some issues that probably deserve more lengthy treatment. He remedies this in the endnotes by giving numerous citations to sources in which the issue at hand can be explored much more deeply.

The 'nice touches' in this book come near the end. McKim spends chapter 17 citing other Reformed scholars, some of whom came up with different emphases for the Reformed tradition than this book shows. He cites the work of A.A. Hodge, the late scholar of Princeton; John H. Leith, of Union Seminary in Virginia; as well as I. John Hesselink and Jack Rogers. In chapter 18, McKim answers some common questions about the Reformed tradition, questions I am asked often. It is in this (sadly) short chapter that he addresses, in only four paragraphs, one of my passions about the tradition, which is church government. The nineteenth chapter is a question (one for each week of a year) catechism, which McKim prepared to be "Reformed and ecumenical" (p. 186). It, too, is a useful tool. Following this is a list of Presbyterian and Reformed churches known to exist in Canada and the United States. Recognizing that this approach is not the only approach by which to understand the Reformed tradition, he lists comparative sources near the end of the book to give the very curious some additional reading.

As I constantly am updating my curriculum for teaching newcomers to my congregation about the Reformed tradition, I will use this book as a source, and will surely work it out in a short time due to the number of times I will turn back to it for reference. For a believer in the Reformed tradition or outside the tradition, it is a book well worth reading.

Jeffrey F. Lor

Leon J. Podles, *The Church Impotent: The Feminization of Christianity*. Dallas: Spence, 1987. xviii + 288 pp, paper, \$10.77.

Leon Podles' book might easily be dismissed by Evangelicals as one of the more bizarre entries in the male/female leadership debate. Such a dismissal would be entirely



understandable. Podles' view of Scripture fluctuates. Most of his discussion treats the text as able, but, when he does comment on origins, he contends: "The main books of the Old Testament took their canonical form in the midst of the Exile" (65). "The writer of Genesis" ended the exile on "a flaw in the relationship of man and woman. This flaw was projected back to the very beginning of history" (64). Few Evangelicals would posit a pool of authors shaping the Genesis account of Adam and Eve to explain the exile. And few should be comfortable with the New Testament theory that the gospels were written as apologies to the Romans and therefore the Jews, for whom the Romans felt no special affection, were the enemies given most prominence" (81). Problematic, too, is his contention the Holy Spirit is "'the reciprocal love between the Father and Son'" which "becomes itself a person" when that love "'attains fullness" (81).

His main argument that sex does not equal masculinity/femininity, sex and gender are different, and, therefore, the Persons of the Trinity are masculine, but not male, while their nature is feminine, but not female, is at best circular. It rests on an inductive sexual observation - that men separate, women unite or commune - which is posited back into the supposedly non-sexual Godhead. Such reasoning triggers implications Podles would very much want; for example, at the moment of this review a transgendered candidate is petitioning a congregation in our vicinity using the same basic argument sex does not equal gender, claiming his sex is male, his gender identity female, so he has had himself scientifically validated. While his argument is no stronger than Podles', it does make a reader question the logic of the underlying theory of the book:

Why use the term gender when sex is explicitly not involved? Why ask whether God is masculine or feminine, positing definitions back to God drawn from human behavior? Such a procedure is similar to asking what race God is (Is God white or black?) by basing one's discussion on current socio-anthropological or ethnographic descriptions of races. The great Marcus Garvey objected to just such reasoning: "Our God has no color, yet it is human to see everything through one's own spectacles, and since the white people have seen God through their spectacles, we have only now started out (late though it be) to see our God through our own spectacles" (*Philosophy and Opinions*, 1:44). One could paraphrase: "While our God has no sex, it is human to see everything through one's own spectacles of gender, so we men posit God as masculine (and disagree with feminists who label God as feminine...)." But, with gendered language not consistent in ancient Hebrew and Greek for all 3 persons of the Trinity, and verses explicitly resisting identifying God with such categories (e.g. Deut 4:15-16, Mark 12:25), why do

Why is God not supragenderal? As God is not Jewish, though God worked powerfully through the Jews, God need not be labeled masculine to work powerfully through males. This point underscores a series of inconsistencies in Podles' methodology. For example, he uses the gender based language argument to claim masculinity for the Father and Son, but ignores gendered language in his discussion of the Spirit (the Spirit is feminine in Hebrew, neuter in Greek). He also avoids discussing the obvious objection against gender-based language having universal gender references (e.g. how is a "year" feminine and a "day" masculine in Hebrew? How are a "year" neuter and a "day" feminine in Greek)? Other inconsistencies include claiming Jesus choosing only male disciples "to spare women that burden" of martyrdom (79), and commenting eight pages later "the sacraments have always been open to women, as has

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martyrdom" (87). Finally, a heavy dose of Roman Catholicism (e.g. "Mary is the mother of Church", 85) might close out Evangelical interest in this book altogether. But such dismissal would be a mistake. This last part, the heavy Roman Catholic nature of the book, is actually strength and its real contribution.

Leon Podles himself was a Roman Catholic pre-seminarian who dropped out of seminary because of the endemic, rampant homosexuality (x). Given the recent high profile Roman Catholic scandals (especially currently in Boston with Paul Shanley and the embattled Cardinal Law), the book becomes more than simply a heterodox offering in the seemingly endless debate on female leadership, this time on the complementarian side. Podles' complaints and the final analysis are essentially about the "homosexualizing" of Christianity through "feminizing" of it. In other words, this is not a simple recruit in the firing lines of the current Evangelical in-house debate. It is much more: a critique of the legacy of historic Catholicism with an impassioned plea that Evangelicals not follow its errors.

One does not need to accept all his bio/psycho-speak postmodern theomythology to realize that Roman Catholic theology and practice are in deep trouble in its high incidence of pederasty among its ordained leadership. Neither should we be put off by his English professor's penchant for hyperbole ("The Methodist Church is a women's club at prayer" [xv]). "*Christianity Today* has made as many compromises as it can with feminism and ignores the problem of the lack of men in the church" [xv]) to recognize this is a hurting man who is delivering a serious warning. If we take into account the context out of which Podles is writing, Evangelicals on either side of the women's leadership debate can learn something useful.

When he addresses the issue of homosexuality he can provide provocative insights (e.g. 70-71). Refreshing is his break with the usual man is active, woman is passive mythology and particularly enlightening is his analysis of the origin of that chestnut, the Aristotelian revival of medieval scholastic thinking with its bridal and maternal theology (102ff). His helpful detailing of the shifting of the bride of Christ imagery from the collective to the individual explains the disenfranchisement of men from the Church (and also enlightened me personally why, since early puberty, if not before, I have always loathed the hymn "In the Garden" and Warner Sallman's "bearded lady" picture of Christ). His final plea that brotherly love be salvaged from sexual aberration so that churches can create a safe place to grow our sons healthfully into holy men is a concern all of us need to take to heart.

Like Ezekiel lying down on his sides for 390 and 40 days respectively to gain attention for his points (Ezek 4:4-6), Professor Podles' approach may appear at times to be a strange one, but his warning is timely and serious.

William David Spencer, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

James R. White, *The God Who Justifies*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2001, 394 pp., \$19.99.

The Reformers of the 16<sup>th</sup> century viewed the doctrine of justification as being at the very core of the Gospel. Martin Luther described justification by faith alone as the article by which the church stands or falls. He wrote: "When the article of justification has fallen, the church is no longer a church."

everything has fallen. Therefore it is necessary constantly to inculcate and impress it, as Moses of his Law (Deut. 6:7); for it cannot be inculcated and urged enough or too much."

James White makes a valuable contribution to the literature on this doctrine with *The God Who Justifies*. This book is written with a 21<sup>st</sup> century audience in mind for the purpose of acquainting a new generation with the basics of the doctrine of justification. It makes a welcome addition to such classics as James Buchanan's *The Doctrine of Justification* written in 1867.

The book is divided into two main sections. The first section contains an overview of topics related to justification. White discusses the biblical definition of justification, the role of justification and the central importance of God's Word in laying out the parameters of justification. He devotes one full chapter to the grounds of a believer's justification, namely, the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and the implications of that unique salvation event for our justification. White frequently refers to the wisdom of past writers on the subject. He freely quotes from James Buchanan, John Murray, Jonathan Edwards, John Calvin, and a number of other church fathers to reinforce with the reader that his is not a novel approach to the subject but rather is right in line with traditional Christian teachings on justification.

The second section contains a detailed exegesis and commentary on a number of New Testament passages relating to justification. The passages, taken from Romans, Galatians, Ephesians and James are presented in Greek (from the Nestle-Aland 27 text) and in English. Alternate translations are provided when there is an issue on how a word or phrase should be rendered.

James White carefully steps through these texts to present the case for our separation from God due to sin, our inability to justify ourselves before God and the need for God to justify the ungodly. He demonstrates from the Greek text as well as the context of the passages that justification is spoken of as a God-declared righteousness (in Paul's letters) and as a righteousness demonstrated to others (in the letter of James). White works through the places where textual variants play a role in the exegesis of the passage. He also discusses the case of how to proceed in understanding the meaning of a text when the translation of a phrase is uncertain. An example is found on page 186 of the book, referring to Romans 3:22. Paul uses the phrase "*Pisteōs Iesou Christou*." Is he writing about *faith in Christ* or the *faithfulness of Christ*? James White wrestles with this and other issues. He details how a translator must work through grammar, context and other factors to best determine how a word or phrase is best translated. White's discussions on how to approach the work of translating Scripture is not merely theoretical. He was a critical consultant for the update of the New American Standard Bible in the 1990s.

The length of the book and its use of detailed exegesis from the Greek text might seem daunting to the average reader. However, the nature and importance of the subject requires careful exposition and argumentation. In an age of short attention spans, an author may be tempted to write about the doctrine of justification by faith alone in only a cursory manner. The average reader can get through White's book and understand it. But it will take time. Trying to short-circuit that process would be like someone new to the sport of baseball asking an expert to explain the rules, history and strategies of baseball and to cover it, in great depth, and do so in



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only 30 minutes. Reading and thinking through *The God Who Justifies* will take time and will be worth every minute of the effort.

This is an excellent overall treatment of the topic. James White is faithful to Scripture on the subject and does not deviate from centuries of church teaching on the subject. One aspect that I really liked was the author's emphasis on holding these truths and doing so passionately. Justification by faith is something not only to be studied but cherished as well. It is the means by which God regards us as being in right standing before Him because of Christ. This is the vital truth of our life in Christ. As Luther pointed out, if the knowledge of justification falls away, the knowledge of other doctrines will fall away as well. White's zeal for the subject and his sound exegetical and theological treatment of justification in his book show that fervor and scholarship can be found together in the same work.

Walter Har

Joel R. Beeke and Sinclair B. Ferguson, eds., *Reformed Confessions Harmonized*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999. 271 pp., paper, \$21.99.

As a Presbyterian, I was excited to receive this book for review. Many years ago, as a divinity student, I stumbled across a used book in a Christian bookstore in Toronto entitled *Harmony of the Westminster Presbyterian Standards*, for which I paid the princely sum of CDN\$35.00 at the time – but what a find! It illustrated parallels between the Westminster Confession, the Larger Catechism and the Shorter Catechism, using a pattern similar to Bunyan's *Throckmorton's ubiquitous Gospel Parallels*. The present volume has rekindled my excitement, in that it has gone a step beyond by adding parallels from earlier materials – the Belgic Confession of 1561, the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563, the Second Helvetic Confession of 1566, and the Canons of Dort of 1619. Altogether, these represent three strands of the Reformed tradition: the Dutch-German (Belgic, Heidelberg, Dort), the Swiss (Helvetic), and the Scottish-English (Westminster). Facing pages show these seven columns under several rubrics: theology, anthropology, Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology.

Some who are not part of the Reformed tradition may think a book like this to be a bit of an eye-glazer, but this is a valuable tool for any Christian who takes the Bible seriously. Much evangelical theology owes some of its expression to the Reformed confessions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Any student of Protestant history will quickly tell you that these documents made a significant impact on the life and faith of the church universal in the years around their compilation and publication.

While many Reformed churches have fallen away from the use of catechetical materials in their programs of preparation for profession of faith, it still finds regular use in affirming the faith of the church in worship (as a change from the use of the Apostles' Creed, for example), in illustrating the points of a sermon or lesson. If, for example, you were preaching a series on the Ten Commandments, you could use a resource like this to find out that both the Heidelberg Catechism and both the Westminster Catechisms address the decalogue, and help to clarify the meaning behind the commandments. So, to use the fifth commandment as an example, you could look in *A Harmony of Reformed Confessions* on pages 152 to 157 to find, among other things,



question 124 of the Larger Catechism asks, "Who are meant by father and mother in the fifth commandment?", with the answer ensuing.

What brackets the *Harmony* is equally as helpful as the *Harmony* itself. The introduction includes a brief overview of each of the confessions used in the book, which gives reader a snapshot of the circumstances behind the preparation of each document. Then, a 24-annotated bibliography concludes this valuable source book – a tool worthy of a book all on own. It is compiled following the pattern of the Belgic Confession, the oldest Reformed standard included in the *Harmony*. It is limited to works in English, and, as Dr. Beeke confesses, "could be of value to readers of Reformed persuasion" (p. 247). It might, however, also be valuable for those outside the tradition who want to study it from an historic, confessional perspective.

This book would be a useful addition to every pastor's library, including those who come from churches that are not accustomed to confessions and catechisms.

Jeffrey Loach

John E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson, eds., *Marks of the Body of Christ*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999. 179 pp., paper, \$18.00.

Utilizing Martin Luther's seven "marks" of the church this book is the compilation of presentations by an ecumenical group of scholars including Gerhard Forde, Richard Lischer, John Wood, John Erickson, K. Paul Wesche, Richard Norris, Jr, David Yeago, Carl Braaten, Robert Jenson and William Abraham. This diverse group of essayists brings intelligent insight from Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist and Orthodox thought.

The reader will find Luther's "marks" quite provocative, particularly as they are contrasted with the church of today. Suggestions brought by the authors are relevant and important. No doubt readers will find an historical ledge to stand where one can look at the perspectives of the church today versus the values of Luther.

One criticism of the book is that there is neither an introductory nor concluding chapter summarizing with a broad brush the direction or conclusion of the contributions included. Perhaps a joint concluding by both Jenson and Braaten would have been helpful in piecing together any threads of commonality found in the book.

Certainly these "marks" of the church listed by Luther and the discussions of this book could provide interesting background for a class to study in the local church.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, Texas

Ann Braude, *Women and American Religion*. Religion in American Life, ed. J. Butler and H. S. G. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. 141 pp., hardcover, \$24.00.

Ann Braude begins her treatment of women's contribution to American religion with the comment that although women comprise the majority of membership in almost all religious groups throughout American history, they nevertheless have had to take a backseat to male

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religious leaders (pp. 11-12). In spite of this, women have made a significant contribution to the development of religion in America in a great variety of ways.

Braude begins to survey these contributions with the early Puritan period in American history. In the 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries she shows that women's contributions were in pluralistic religious households in the New World. Although restricted at first, women's roles began to expand in the 19<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> centuries through their use of spiritual gifts to effect church and social growth and reform (pp. 12-13).

Women have played a significant role in American religion, yet Braude contends that this has often been overlooked. She shows how women's activities and beliefs have been meaningful to shape the development and growth of American religion. Braude highlights women's contributions from various groups. She focuses on women's activities in sects and groups such as the Shakers with Mother Ann Lee (p. 30), the Quakers with Mary Dyer and Sarah and Angelina Grimke (pp. 43-49), Christian Science with Mary Baker Eddy (p. 53), Pentecostalism with Aimee Semple McPherson (p. 116), in addition to Roman Catholics (pp. 85). Braude also highlights women's contributions in various ethnic groups such as Jewish women (p. 66), Native American Chief Wilma Mankiller of the Cherokee Nation (p. 81), as well as Chinese women in America (p. 76), Muslim women in America (p. 131), and African American women like Jarena Lee (p. 41).

Braude concludes the work with a discussion of the contemporary period "Since the 1960's" (p. 111). She addresses issues of women's roles in church leadership today and women's quest for ordination and equal rights in the church. At the end of the book is a timeline highlighting women's contributions in America for three centuries (pp. 134-35) as well as a bibliography for further reading (pp. 136-38).

The work is broad in its spectrum and it is quite readable. Braude deals with the religious contributions of women in America from many different groups and voices. This is the strength of the work. Its inclusivity of women from various historical time periods as well as various ethnic groups makes it a rich and valuable survey of American women in religion. Braude provides a panorama of the breadth of women's contributions to the development of religion in America.

JoAnn Ford Wa

Colin Duriez and David Porter, *The Inklings Handbook*. Chalice Press, 2001. 244 pages, hardcover, \$32.99.

There is great relevance to this book with all the renewed interest in Tolkien accompanying the release of the Lord of the Rings films. With this revived interest in Tolkien has been a resurgence of interest in the group of English writers known as the Inklings. The Inklings include J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, Owen Barfield and a few others who drift in and out of this informal gathering and who met in Oxford from 1933 to 1949 once or twice a week to read their works out loud to one another. Duriez and Porter have put together a handbook on the Inklings which includes a series of six essays about the writers

writings along with an elaborate glossary of ideas gathered about these people and their associates.

*The Inklings Handbook* is divided into two parts with the first having six essays on the Inklings and the second as a type of encyclopedia or comprehensive guide to the group's personalities, associates, and literary works. The book begins as if it is going to be an interesting description of the writing craft and of the friendship among the Inklings probing into the ways they enhanced each other's particular natures and works. The first chapter of only four and a half pages uses a variety of resources to describe the development and voice of the Inklings. The chapter comes from the novelist John Wain's biography (Wain an early participant in these meetings) and is particularly insightful. This chapter left me hungering for more, however. The second chapter is a detailed twelve-page chronology of the history of the Inklings' reading of their various works to one another along with the dates of their publications beginning with 1917 and Tolkien's starting of *The Silmarillion* through the death of Tolkien in 1973 and Owen Barfield in 1977. This section had wonderful tidbits of information about the Inklings, such as from a reference dated Thursday, April 13, 1944 gathered from a letter from Tolkien to his son. Duriez and Porter note Tolkien writes concerning a book being written and read to the group, "The best of it, according to JRRT (Tolkien), is Warnie's chapter on the court of Louis XIV. He is not partial to the concluding chapter of CSL's (Lewis) *The Great Divorce*." Or the notation from May of the same year when Tolkien reads two chapters from *The Lord of the Rings* which Tolkien approves with "great fervor" and is moved to tears.

The next couple of chapters are a bit disappointing to me. Chapter three focuses only on the *Chronicles of Narnia*, especially on how the ideas of Narnia developed, on the history of Narnia, and on the geography of Narnia. This chapter had me puzzled as to what it had to do with the Inklings in general. The fourth chapter does the same concerning Middle Earth, again with little relevance to the Inklings. The fifth chapter is the most interesting one to me. Here the Hurian legend is discussed and this ties together the Inklings since various members were influenced by this legend and used it in their own literature, especially Lewis and Charles Williams.

The sixth chapter concludes the essay section of the book. It focuses on Lewis, Tolkien, and Williams and their views of imagination and theology. This six-page chapter could serve as the basis of an entire book. The emphasis is upon the romantic element in their works and some of the common influences on all of them, such as natural theology or George MacDonald. These essays conclude after only forty-three pages and are followed by one hundred and eighty pages of an encyclopedia of Inklings-related subjects, entitled *The Inklings from A-Z*. This section was very broad and comprehensive and could have been entitled, "Everything You Wanted to Know About the Inklings and More." I particularly enjoyed the essays on issues I was familiar with, such as the affirmative way from Charles Williams or the backgrounds of some of the younger members of the Inklings. The book can be a useful tool and is filled with insightful information on the Inklings. I think I would have liked it better had the second part been a separate book by itself and the first part had been the beginnings of another book of essays on the Inklings. I have to admit I have come to like the cartoonish nature of the slipcover of the book but initially I delayed reading the book due to this cartoonish cover of Tolkien and Lewis.



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standing outside The Eagle and Child pub in Oxford, one of the frequent meeting places of Inklings.

Mark Hamilton, Ashland University

Rowan Greer, *Christian Hope and Christian Life. Raids on the Inarticulate*. New York, Herder and Herder, 2001. 282 pp., \$24.95.

The purpose of this book is to revive an approach to Christian faith and life which recently been much neglected: this life in the context of hope for the life to come. The subtitle refers to the necessary limits of such a quest, and of the way in which the author's main sources have probed eternity's sheer impenetrability and mystery. An introduction to the main exposition is provided by an extended account of New Testament teaching on the relation between eschatological hope and the Christian life. No attempt is made to synthesize the teaching, and a range of emphases is placed side by side, from the more temporally oriented eschatology of Paul to the below-average pattern that the author discerns in the Fourth Gospel. There is no treatment of the Book of Revelation, perhaps a strange omission in the context.

The main content of the book is to be found in extended accounts of the thought of four authors, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, John Donne and Jeremy Taylor, each of them prefaced with an account of his religious development. From the ancient world come Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine, in whose thought we discern the sheer complexity of the Christian tradition. In these expositions, we see something of the conversation that has always taken place between the Platonic tradition and the biblical gospel, for both of these thinkers are deeply platonic, and yet in different ways. While Gregory's thought simply cannot be made coherent, Augustine's is more nearly so; and while Gregory says many things that verge on what was later to be rejected as Pelagianism, Augustine's greater pessimism about the human condition gives a shape to his thought that Gregory's lacks. Moreover, his stronger distinction between the soul and the material creation saves him from Gregory's virtual panentheism. The two classical writers from the Anglican spiritual tradition give the exposition a chiastic structure, for Jeremy Taylor is shown to echo some of Gregory's emphases, while Donne is more Augustinian.

It is good to have all four of these great thinkers expounded in such depth and detail, especially for the reminder of the impoverishing effect of so much modern Christian activism. The book was also highly salutary reading for your reviewer, who is rather skeptical about this particular tradition, and, in context, very Anglican – tradition of Christian spirituality. But let me put an, I hope, gentle, question. Does not the modern reaction against Platonising spirituality, for all its aridity, have a genuine criticism to make, that traditional eschatology has been weakened by a lack of concrete contribution from a notion of eschatology as the renewing of both the heaven and the earth alongside its treatment of the destiny of the human creature? That is to say, has the tradition not been too exclusively preoccupied with the relation between the soul and its God? While any corrective to the sentimentality of so-called creation spirituality is to be welcomed, must we not also acknowledge that the injection of Platonism into Christianity did carry a heavy price in an over-spiritualizing of the tradition that overlooked the fact that our bodies relate



ne definitely, and, in the context of the doctrine of the resurrection, more positively to our  
erial context that was allowed, certainly by the great Father of all western theology?

None of that, however, should be allowed to detract from the value of this  
ashionably edifying piece of writing.

Colin Gunton, Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton

hryn Lindskoog, *Surprised by C. S. Lewis, George MacDonald, and Dante*. Mercer  
iversity Press, 2001. 221 pp., hardcover.

It is refreshing to read the work of an articulate, brilliant liberal arts person who is  
ulfed in her subject matter. Lindskoog's knowledge and insight about Lewis, which she first  
onstrated in her now classic *C. S. Lewis, Mere Christian*, is displayed in an even greater  
ught provoking manner in this scholarly, yet highly readable book of twenty-three essays.  
e first seven delightful essays center primarily on Lewis. There is the amusing "Who Is This  
n?" the emotional comparison of Lewis to Beatrix Potter, Lindskoog's own fantasy into the  
nd of Lewis called "The Splendid Lands," a summary of Lewis' ideas on Christmas, and a  
vly discovered essay by Lewis entitled "All or Nothing."

e next eleven essays connect Lewis to the ideas of various other writers, including Dante and  
cDonald, but also Sinclair Lewis, Dorothy Sayers, Willa Cather, D.H. Lawrence, and Mark  
ain.

The final five essays are her sage observations about Lewis on topics such as Natural  
w, joy, and writing. She tells how Lewis often gave away writing pointers to both friends and  
angers. She says that after reading her thesis "he pointed out one weak sentence where I could  
ve been misread, and he included the following bit of free advice: 'Most readers will  
understand if you give them the slightest chance. (It's like driving cattle; if there's an open  
eway anywhere on the road, they'll go into it!)" This section also provides an essay of  
ndskoog's personal discoveries and insights into Dante.

First and foremost Lindskoog is a great storyteller. In her essay, "Unexpected  
easure" she writes,

The Lewis family had many silly nicknames. Their mother often called  
their father "Old Bear," and when they got older the boys secretly called  
him "Potato," as he pronounced it—"Pudaita." The boys were named  
Warren and Clive, but when they were little they were usually called  
"Badgie" and "Babs." Most boys wouldn't like to be called Clive or Babs  
very well and when Clive was only four years old he announced. "I'm  
Jacksie! Jack was the only name he would answer to from that day on.  
When he grew up and became a famous writer, he signed his books C. S.  
Lewis. But his friends and relatives called him Jack all his life.

It has been a long time since a book brought me such pleasure and delight. Even if you  
ve never read the works of Dante and MacDonald, if you have done any extensive reading of

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Lewis, then this book will provide immense pleasure. It may even stir you to probe into the work of Dante and MacDonald. I often have students ask me how to learn to write. I provide a two-fold answer, write and read great writers. Lindskoog, like Lewis, is the type of writer that those who aspire to write must read.

Mark Hamill

J. I. Packer, *Faithfulness and Holiness: The Witness of J. C. Ryle*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2002. 272 pp., hardcover, \$17.99.

Noted scholar J. I. Packer writes to pay tribute to the life and witness of Anglican Bishop John Charles Ryle (1816-1900). Tribute is due to Ryle who certainly graced the 19th century with significant evangelical influence.

Packer's intent is to introduce Ryle to evangelical readers of today. Unfortunately, the volume lacks significant biographical data to introduce Ryle. Instead the reader is again and again subjected to the hyperbole of Packer who does not do much to create new interest in Ryle. One begins to wonder if the book is more a reflection of Packer's allegiance to "Puritanism" than a biographical piece on Ryle. Most chapters are much too short and the reader is hungry for more detail about Ryle. Disappointing to discover that J. I. Packer's commentary on Bishop Ryle occupies only a third of the book with the other two thirds being a reprint of Ryle's own work, *Holiness*.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, Texas

Steven D. Reschly, *The Amish of the Iowa Prairie, 1840 to 1910*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000, 270 pages.

Reschly's work represents a further addition to the growing literature that considers the Amish and Mennonite experience in America from a sociological perspective. After giving some background material on the Amish origins in Europe and their migration to America, Reschly focuses his study on the Amish community that established itself in Iowa beginning in the 1840s. He works with the thesis that the Amish experience of "marginality and persecution in early modern Europe" led them to develop a repertoire of attitudes and social structures which enabled them to maintain their community even in the midst of multiple migrations (pp. 7-8). In effect, they established a "portable community" whose dynamics allowed ironically for both stability and adaptability on the Iowa prairie.

Reschly develops his thesis through eight chapters. He sets forth the specific attitudes and institutions developed by the Anabaptists and their Amish and Mennonite descendants in chapter one. Chapters two through five delineate some of the most characteristic features of the Amish "repertoire" that made possible the continuation of their distinctive community: the innovative Amish agricultural system, preservationist patriarchy, limitation of their relationships to the modern nation-state, and creation of strategies of land ownership and inheritance that fulfilled their practice of modified community of goods. Chapter six is a fascinating look at the "sleeping preacher," Noah Troyer. His trance speaking, laced as it was with critique of numerous

of the Amish "Ordnung," served to strain the dialectic between individual freedom and communal responsibility. The timing of his messages could not have been more critical, for the Amish were facing a number of internal and external forces that threatened to divide the community in the 1870s and 80s. In chapter seven Reschly shows how the religious divide among the Amish, catalyzed by Troyer, led to a schism in the Amish community between the tradition-minded Old Order Amish and the change-minded Amish-Mennonites. The final chapter considers changes in Amish migration strategies, especially due to the impact of these controversies within the Amish community.

Reschly's narrative is spiced with fascinating personal stories gleaned from such sources as correspondence and diaries. The strength of the book is in the statistical mining of census and land records that yields a wealth of insights about Amish farming practices, family fractions, and land acquisition and holding. Other noteworthy elements are the stories related of the Amish attitude toward the Civil War (some sons of Amish families did serve) and to the creation and demise of new Amish settlements. Especially impressive are the forty pages of notes that demonstrate the thorough research that undergirds the work.

If I do have a disappointment with this work, it is in the opening chapter, where Reschly sets forth the historical foundations for Anabaptism in general and the Amish in particular. He accepts the "assured results" of those who propound the polygenesis theory of the multiple origins of Anabaptism. Though this approach has yielded a more accurate understanding of the diversity and origins of the movement, there are several features of the theory, as reflected in Reschly's discussion, that are problematic. Reschly follows the polygenesis theory's overemphasis on the dissimilarities within the various branches of Anabaptism. As C. Arnold Snyder has argued in *Anabaptist History and Theology*, there is more continuity among the various expressions of Anabaptism than polygenesis theorists have allowed. In addition, Reschly's declaration that "Anabaptism as a religious movement resulted from three failed attempts to impose a radical version of Christianity on the entire social order" (p. 13) is far too simplistic to explain the varied nuances within Anabaptism. Though the Peasants' War, the failure of the radicals to win over Zurich and Zwingli, and the Munster debacle do play key roles in the collective consciousness and subconsciousness of Anabaptists, there are other significant influences on the movement, one of which is the tug in the direction of mysticism, spiritualism, and late-medieval piety as seen in the Christ-mysticism of the Dutch Anabaptists and the love-inspired spiritualism of Denck.

I also felt that Reschly's discussion of Pietism needed further precision. His observation that radical Pietists "often considered Anabaptism their precursor and even sought contact and mutual support" (p. 18) has some truth to it. Radicals did fellowship with Mennonites and the Radical Pietist historian, Gottfried Arnold, did honor the Anabaptists by including them in his *History of the Heretics*. But Radical Pietists were also critical of Anabaptists for their perceived legalism, externalism, and divisiveness. Interestingly, Gottfried Arnold gave an inordinate amount of space in his discussion of Anabaptism to the Anabaptist-spiritualist, David Joris. I also find problematic that Reschly is willing to grant that there are "several central tendencies" that are discernible across "the spectrum of [Pietist] movements" (p. 18), but does not grant this same point to Anabaptism. Pietism is unquestionably more diverse in its origins and expressions than Anabaptism ever was.



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In spite of these scholarly points of debate, I would commend Reschly's work to student of the Anabaptists and Amish, especially when he turns to his topic proper.

Dale Sto

Webster, John, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*, Cambridge University Press, 2000.

This is the sort of book on which one may write a very large review, or a very short one. All the reviews I saw in a day spent reading through the periodicals in Princeton Seminary book room were of the short variety. And wrong. They say things like, "There is no consistent formula of interpreting the various aspects of Barth's theology." Sure there is. My thesis about this book is that each of the 17 different authors proceeds by asking questions of Barth. This is Barth's own approach to theological matters and it seems like a helpful approach for a book about Barth.

Granted some of the questions are more difficult than others. I find Trevor Hart's and Alan Torrance's so. Yet as one begins with John Webster's clear summary of the progress of Barth's life and thought in 14 pages (sic) and concludes with Alasdair Heron's reflection on how he came across Barth's writings as a student and how he practiced theology in an era in which Barth was both lauded and criticized, what we get are clear questions which allow us to proceed with the task of understanding Karl Barth, "the most important Protestant theologian since Schleiermacher," as Webster describes him.

Webster's question is, is Barth so important as all that? Christoph Schwobel writes about Barth's theology. What he does is asks Barth's questions after him. He examines in brief one dispute after another in Barth's career, from his earliest articles through the Church Dogmatics. What is helpful about this is the rich overview which is both precise and yet broad. Is Barth's conception of the task of theology as important as his material contribution to theology? If we weigh these two on a scale, we might remember Barth smiling about the angel's laughter at the wheelbarrow full of the white bound volumes of the Dogmatics. But on the other scale are the countless questions from Barth reflecting on the task of bringing together empirical reality and Christianity through asking questions. Such questions!

Trevor Hart's article on Revelation is difficult because he creates a very wide landscape in which Barth is one figure who can't possibly defend all fronts. And Alan Torrance's article on the Trinity is difficult in part because his question is difficult, how is the Trinity to be conceived?

Francis Watson asks, how does Barth correlate the four sources of Christian theology: Scripture, tradition, reason and experience? His answer is along the lines, the Bible is not read in a vacuum, and Barth recognizes that; yet for Barth it is the Bible which keeps our focus on the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Watson's thesis is that the intent of the Church Dogmatics is to encourage readers to reread the Bible.

Bruce McCormack attempts the difficult theological task of finding the central doctrine in Karl Barth. Is such a task possible, or fruitful? Von Balthasar chose grace as the center of the doctrine of Barth's work. Grace certainly pervades the Dogmatics. McCormack chooses election. Barth's view of election is a correction to the classical teaching he maintains. He proceeds



providing a brief summary - another time this procedure in the book works well - of Barth's view, against Calvin's. He then offers the question, what is the logical relation of God's gracious relation to the trinity of God? McCormack avoids some of the problem in finding the one general idea by working hard to set Barth in a larger discussion concerning God.

On and on the good questions and ideas go. George Hunsinger, for example, begins with George Herbert's summary of Chalcedon Christology. He proceeds to demonstrate how Barth's Christology differs from that of Alexandria with its tendency to Docetism and of Antioch, with its tendency to Nestorianism.

After chapters which tackle the questions of Barth's theological architecture, the concluding chapters of the book consider Christian ethics, an important topic since Barth is sometimes criticized for not considering the practical implications of theology; politics; religions; feminism; and modernity and post-modernity.

The book even comes with an index, a rare addition in works which contain essays by many authors, and a helpful one. As the whole book is.

Robert Ives

Michael Christensen and Shari MacDonald, *Our God Reigns: The Stories Behind Your Favorite Praise and Worship Songs*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2000. 143 pp., paper, \$9.99.

Did you know that the author of one of North America's favorite praise songs was once the first runner-up in the Miss New Mexico contest? It's true! Karen Lafferty, who penned the words and wrote the music for the well-known song "Seek Ye First", was once a beauty queen. Her story, along with twenty-four others, appears in *Our God Reigns*, co-written by a self-described "worship pastor, journalist, and husband/father" and an author and editor. What Ken Beck is to hymn stories, these two are to the stories behind praise songs. *Rev.* magazine (January/February 2001 issue) showed an advertisement from Kregel stating that this book was also available with a companion compact disc (advertised cost: US\$21.99).

As both a pastor and a musician, I enjoyed reading these stories. However, as a Canadian and a Presbyterian, some of them were unfamiliar to me. I would have appreciated having the CD to listen to while I read, but alas, the CD did not come with the review copy! I did know 15 of the 25 songs examined, and found myself humming them as I read about their genesis. Among the best-known songs cited in the book are "As The Deer" (Martin Nystrom); "Give Thanks With A Grateful Heart" (Henry Smith); and "Lord, I Lift Your Name On High" (Rick Founds).

Several common threads appeared in a number of these stories. The most outstanding of them was the connection that so many had with Christ For The Nations Institute in Dallas, Texas - an organization I learned about via the Internet ([www.cfni.org](http://www.cfni.org)). The degree of influence that this organization has had over contemporary praise and worship is pervasive. Other common threads included Youth With A Mission, Christian Copyright Licensing, Incorporated, and a few of the larger contemporary churches in southern California.

The authors interviewed each songwriter, and allowed each one to review the interview material for accuracy before the book went to print. Commonly found in most stories were

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anecdotes of the circumstances around the writing of the song. (This stands in contrast to hymn stories, which tell something of the whole life of the writer; this can be accounted for the fact that most contemporary songwriters are still alive.) Many of the circumstances outlined in the stories were tales of pain or poverty, but that strong faith brought them through every trial.

For worship leaders whose congregations use contemporary music regularly, this book will be a handy reference tool for the purposes of introducing the songs. For worship leaders who are largely unfamiliar with the genre, it serves as a modest introduction. The book is written in a very folksy style (the frequent use of the term "gonna" was a bit disturbing). No stories more than four pages long; the book is easily read in a matter of a couple of hours.

Jeffrey F. Long

Jan G. Linn, *The Jesus Connection: A Christian Spirituality*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 110 pp.

This small, attractive book is by Jan G. Linn, Professor of Ministry at Lexington Theological Seminary. Both the seminary and publisher are agencies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Linn writes for mainline churches and leaders who may be strong in openness and service but are experiencing "theological slippage." He means by that a slide in religion in general, spirituality that is generic, and a bland, anything-goes approach to Christianity. "This book," says Professor Linn, "is my attempt to address this problem. It begins with the conviction that spirituality in the church ought to have something tangible to say about relationship to Jesus Christ. In other words, I contend that Christian spirituality is inextricably bound to the claims of the New Testament in its proclamation of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord" (pp. 2-3).

Like Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship*, Linn's first chapter is crucial to the argument. The author challenges all spirituality that calls itself Christian to get specific. "I want to argue that Christian spirituality offers more than an idea or an example in Jesus. It is an invitation to know him, experience him, love him, and belong to him" (p. 7). That kind of language – and that focused reality – just might be good news to some people, and in some churches.

Linn continues with major chapters on signs of spiritual growth, ways of praying, and marks of a spiritually mature church. Briefer chapters treat the work of the Holy Spirit, the need for discipline, and the struggle with discouragement – topics not discussed often enough. The whole is written in a flowing, lucid style with examples drawn from the author's classroom teaching, retreat leadership, and personal life. He is to be commended for courageously tackling a problem that has lain too long untreated. His discussion makes a good start in the long rehabilitation that lies ahead. I am grateful to the Ashland Seminary alumna who introduced me to this fine book!

Jerry Flint

in and Nigel Palmer, *The Spiritual Traveler: England, Scotland and Wales: The Guide to Sacred Sites and Pilgrim Routes in Britain*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist/ Hidden Spring, 2000. 320 pp., \$20.00.

The brothers Palmer have created a comprehensive pilgrim's guide to sites sacred throughout Britain. It is at one time an introduction to spiritual pilgrimage, a brief history lesson, survey of the sacred landscape, and a careful guide to thirteen pilgrim routes in England, Scotland and Wales,

The authors, experts in Britain's pilgrim routes, and historic church sites, have given the reader a marvelous tool with which to make pilgrimage. Spiritual travel is more than making a journey to a distant land or even following an itinerary to sacred sites. The Palmers alert us to the simple truth that every ancient traveler to sacred places knew: that the journey to the divine begins with the first step and begins within the pilgrim." (xi) Sacred travel invites you to maintain a singular focus, live with heightened awareness and anticipation, and move at a slower pace.

A brief history of the nation sets the stage for an intriguing discussion of Britain's sacred landscape with its stone circles, holy wells, sacred cities, and flora and fauna. A chapter is devoted to each topic. Explanations are supplemented by commentaries on specific sites, cities and villages as well as photographs, sketches, diagrams, and sidebars.

The pilgrim guide section of the book takes you town by town along each well-trodden route with a brief historical commentary, anecdotes, sketches and photos, and literary quotations. Directional boxes give clear instructions and mileage for navigating your way to each point of interest. Strip maps, similar to those found in medieval pilgrim's handbooks, are printed vertically in the margins to give you a visual perspective on your journey.

Here is a wonderful book for all seasons. Pick it up on a cold winter's evening and dream about following a pilgrim path next summer. Open it in the spring to plot your journey. Carry it with you as a guide along the way. Retrieve it in the fall to reflect upon your experience. I have used the Palmer's work in each season as I planned and followed the famous Canterbury route and a portion of the Ely to Walsingham route through East Anglia to Norwich and St. Edmund's Church. The text prepared me for the pilgrimages, guided me along both routes, and alerted me to significant historical events and sites along the way.

Travel stirs something deep within. But a sacred journey heightens the experience as you narrow your focus, open yourself to the serendipity of the road, and discover things you could never learn as a tourist. It is a pilgrim's delight just to be on the way. *The Spiritual Traveler* is a wonderful volume not only for its content but also for the inspiration it gives. Reading its pages sets your "toe to tapping," your mind to wonder, and your spirit to soar. Journey well!

Rick Ryding, Seattle Pacific University

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Ben Patterson, *Deepening Your Conversation With God: Learning to Love to Pray*. Beth House, 2000.

Ben Patterson is not "into" prayer. He confesses that he missed the religious genre whatever it is that makes people enjoy the act of praying. With refreshing candor Ben writes a book which encourages us to learn to love to pray.

For homiletical purposes the entire book is filled to the brim with marvelous illustrative material. To simply say 'illustrative' is not enough — for the illustrations are very persuasive. For example is Patterson's citing of theologian Hans Kung's massive 602 page treatise entitled, 'Being a Christian.' Not a word in Kung's book about prayer! Asked why, Professor Kung answered, in effect, 'I forgot.' He spoke about the publisher's deadline, the harassment he was receiving from the Vatican, and he simply overlooked 'prayer.' It is a real life parable reminding us that prayer is always the first thing to go when we get caught up in the busyness of the church and the hurried pace of the world. Writes Patterson, '...only prayer can deliver us from that pace.'

This book is far from a scholarly treatise on prayer, but it is a very practical one in the style of Ben Patterson's previous books. Preaching on prayer? — this is a wonderful book of sermon ideas. Lacking a prayer life? — this is a motivational book particularly for a pastor.

Cliff Stev

H. Wayne House, *Charts of Cults, Sects, & Religious Movements*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000. 352 pp., paper, \$26.99.

Wayne House has prepared a very useful source book for nineteen different cults, sects and religious movements. They are presented alphabetically, from Alamo Christian Ministries through to The Way International, and include such well-known groups as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Eckankar, Freemasonry and the Jehovah's Witnesses. House acknowledges in the preface that since most of the work for the book was completed in 1990 there may be some information included in it that is not current. Nevertheless, it gives an exceptionally good snapshot of each group. House further acknowledges that there is no commonly accepted definition of a cult or a sect, but that he uses the terms to refer to "doctrinal deviation from orthodox Christianity and not in reference to sociological or psychological characteristics" (p. 9).

As it is a group that generates significant discussion among Canadian Presbyterians, some of whom would consider it a dubious choice to be included among cults, sects and new religious movements, I chose to study the chapter on Freemasonry as part of this review. Though the author made use of an abbreviation which he did not spell out — "A/W" — the section was otherwise clear and concise. House made use of a variety of sources for his material, both primary and secondary, which was helpful. This way, the reader is first introduced to what the organization says about itself, then to what those outside, both sympathetic and not, say about it. He begins each group's chapter with a section on facts and history about the organization, followed by several pages of theological issues and the group's position on them. Each page



up in chart form (as with other Zondervan books of charts), with three columns: position, report, and orthodox response.

The positions that are addressed by the author are both those that are commonly considered and some that are less well-known. For example, in the chapter on Freemasonry, House discusses such well-known issues as "The God of Freemasonry is most often referred to as the 'Great Architect of the Universe' (G.A.O.T.U.)" (p. 142), and some lesser-known issues such as "Part of the Masonic plan of salvation includes the ultimate realization that we are not only morally good, but divine" (p. 147). The exhaustive, but not overwhelming, nature of the author's work makes this a treasure-trove for pastors and lay people alike as they seek to understand what is of God among the religious groups of the world today.

There are two appendices, the first giving an extensive description – in chart form – of orthodox Christian doctrine, in the same rubrical order as one would find a systematic theology. This is especially helpful for seekers or unbelievers who might pick up this book for general interest, as it shows them not only what is heretical, but what is considered orthodox Christian doctrine as well.

The second appendix contains five creeds of the church – the Apostles' Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Constantinopolitan Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Definition of Chalcedon. Curiously, the wording cited for the Apostles' Creed varies from what would be familiar to many as a liturgical document. Similarly, the wording of the Nicene Creed would surprise some readers, as would that of the Constantinopolitan Creed, which without the *filioque* clause otherwise reads as the Nicene Creed would to many believers.

Finally, House furnishes the reader with a significant bibliography for those who may wish to do further research into any of the groups studied in the book. On the whole, this book is well worth having on the shelf for the sake of reference, especially if you have ever thought even of inviting that pesky door-knocker into your home for some dialogue!

Jeff Loach

David A. Evans and Peter W. Flint, eds., *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature* 1. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1997. xii + 176 pp., paper. \$20.00.

The first in the series *Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature, Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls* offers the reader several contributions on the prominent theme of eschatology and messianism as shared and developed among the writings of the Old (OT) and New Testament (NT), the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), and related intertestamental, Jewish literature. This volume aims to portray the eschatological emphases found among these writings as by no means monolithic in perspective. Although, clearly, these writings and their intended audiences shared various views on future events (1), the nature of the expectations vary to a considerable degree and may or may not always remain consistent even within a particular group of writings themselves.

Representative of the variety of eschatological and messianic perspectives claimed by the book's contributors, the book itself contains articles ranging from a discussion of a Moses

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typology of prophetic messianism as perhaps used in DSS and NT sources (by Paul E. Hughes, 10-22) to a consideration of Paul's use of and dependence on Merkabah mysticism in his conception of his apostleship (by James M. Scott, 101-119). Other contributions, from well-known scholars in the field (e.g., Peter W. Flint, Martin G. Abegg, Jr., John J. Collins, and Charles A. Evans), offer views on biblical and non-biblical scrolls (and their uses) and their relation to various traditions and philosophical ideas portrayed within the Judeo-Christian heritage of the Greco-Roman culture. A consistent theme among all the contributions in this volume insists on the variety of interpretations one finds in the dramas of or leading to (and the persons involved in) "the end." In addition, the DSS themselves have much to offer toward the interpretation of eschatological and messianic texts of early Judaism and Christianity. An underlying conception of the contributors is to view the DSS as a *link* between eschatology and messianism in the Second Temple period, especially among the prophetic books, and their later manifestations in the NT corpus. Several contributors highlight the activity of reinterpretation and re-appropriation of these themes found in early Jewish and Christian writings, showing that this process can already be detected in the DSS themselves. Eschatological and messianic perspectives of early Judaism and Christianity need not be based on the Greco-Roman, religio-philosophical environment; although, they certainly reflect involvement in a Greco-Roman social context.

A book of this sort may easily become overly technical and beyond the grasp of a broader readership. Not so with this introductory volume. Although one may find the last two articles of the book (dealing with the complex topics, in themselves, of throne-chair [Merkabah] mysticism and Johannine messianism, respectively) a bit more technical than the previous seven, the book as a whole is both erudite and comprehensible to the reader not so very steeped in the contributors' scholarly milieu. This volume is valuable both for its contribution to scholarship on the DSS and its portrayal of the DSS as integral to conceptions of eschatology and messianism among early Jewish and Christian writings.

C. Jason Borders, Brunel University/London Bible College

Avraham Negev and Shimon Gibson, eds., *Archeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land* (revised and updated edition). New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc., 2000. 555 pp., hardcover, \$39.95.

This work is a definitive, one volume archeological encyclopedia of the Holy Land and is a must acquisition of anyone interested in biblical study. It has over 800 entries and 200 illustrations including pictures, maps and diagrams. The work is a recent revision of the original 1972 version having been revised previously in 1986 and 1990. There are 125 contributors to this exhaustive work. The original (1972) edition had 600 entries by 20 scholars with 200 illustrations and cost \$15.95.

In the 2001 edition, entries begin with ABARIM (see Nebo) and include geographic, historical and biblical references concluding with ZUZIM; EMMIM. The latter were two people referred to in Genesis 14.5. In addition to the 285 illustrations, there is a chronological table tracing the archaeological periods from Paleolithic to Ottoman, 1917, thus spanning the last 12,000 years.

ennia, a chronological chart of the kings of Israel and Judah as well as the Hasmoneans, the Hadians and the Procurators. A helpful glossary is also a part of the end material.

Distinguished scholars from all over the world have contributed from their expertise in site by site descriptions of digs, archeological discoveries, historical commentary and general articles. This work can serve as a ready reference and commentary for biblical study. O Negev is Professor of Classical Archeology at the Institute of Archeology of Hebrew University. He has directed numerous digs and is a prolific author. Shimon Gibson is a field archeologist currently in charge of the excavations on Mount Zion, and editor and an author of many articles.

Richard E. Allison

Strobel, *The Case for Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation of the Evidence for Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998. Paper.

The central thesis of this book describes the pilgrimage of Lee Strobel, an investigative journalist, to ascertain reliable information to either document the existence of Jesus Christ as the Messiah, or to defy that he was who he claimed to be, the divine and only Son of God. Though the author is an atheist, the diligence with which he searches for answers about the historical Jesus may give meaning to the personal search of those who read this book.

Through a long, tedious process of interviewing the most astute Biblical scholars, Strobel's questions are answered in profoundly convincing dialogues. In the book he shares each question verbatim in the detailed, unbiased manner to which he is accustomed to reporting trials as a former legal editor of the *Chicago Tribune*.

Each section begins with a documented criminal case which has been carefully searched and prosecuted with an occasional sentencing of the innocent, the result of improperly gathered or mishandled evidence or of unreliable witnesses or contrived circumstances or testimony. Strobel progresses then into a similar argument against or in support of a piece of evidence in the Scriptural context of Jesus' life; e.g., in his first interview with Scottish professor Craig Blomberg at Aberdeen University, Strobel questions the credibility of the authors of the gospels. Blomberg's trust in the ancient texts is supported by the eyewitness theory of their authors, contrasted against the fictitious naming of the apocryphal gospels. Such ordinary, well-known characters as Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are accepted as authors, regardless of their poor credibility. John's authorship is unanimously attested to by more than a dozen Biblical scholars, interviewed by Strobel (Strobel 1998, 26-28).

The time period of thirty to sixty years encompassing eyewitness accounts of Jesus' life is considered "negligible by comparison" to the usual formulation of legend which normally occurs over a 400-500 year period after the death of the individual. Such is the case of Alexander the Great who died 323 B.C.E. Accounts are considered accurate though recorded 400 years later (Strobel 1998, 40). Blomberg's eyewitness theory is further argued by Jesus' appearance in resurrected form to some 500 persons after his appearance to the twelve disciples. These people were already participating in organized worship by the time Paul was given their creed of beliefs. That the event of Christ's resurrection, though not officially recorded "can be dated to within two



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years of that very event. This information pretty much weakens the mythological concept legends developed over time corrupting the eye witness accounts of Christ's life" (Strobel 1944).

The Yale Law School editor's questioning uncertainty is further addressed by Blomberg as he denies that oral tradition has allowed the writings to become distorted in the fashion of telephone conversations; rather, that they were carefully passed along only when the author believed the accuracy of the story. Thus, allowing for variations and wording omissions, Strobel describes the Gospels as "extremely consistent with each other by ancient standards, which are the only standards by which it's fair to judge them" (Strobel 1998, 56-57). He further notes that there are no adverse witness accounts contrary to Scripture (Strobel 1998, 66).

Blomberg concludes by saying that, "Many New Testament scholars have come to faith in Christ." Strobel defends his disbelief: "I am not a scholar, but a skeptic, an iconoclast, a hard nosed reporter on a quest for the truth about this Jesus who said he was the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (Strobel 1998, 68).

Further investigation provides conclusive evidence for the multiplicity of copies that is so vital to Bruce Metzger, Princeton Theological Seminary professor and author of fifty books who argues for the authenticity of manuscripts carefully cross checked to match bits of papyrus dated to C.E. 98-117 for the Gospel of John. A wealth of evidence exists in Greek documents, manuscripts, and lectionaries for the New Testament, compared with other "books of antiquity" (Strobel 1998, 80).

Strobel finds answers for other inquiries, such as why the earth became black at the hour of Christ's death (Strobel 1998, 110-111); the Talmud, Mishnah, and Josephus accounts of Jesus' healing ministry. Was it ministry or sorcery (Strobel 1998, 112-113). He interviews Ed Yamauchi at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, former Buddhist now a follower of Jesus, an archaeologist and student of twenty-two languages. Strobel learns that the documentation of Jesus' life exceeds that of any founders of an ancient religion.

Strobel continues the archaeological search to document Luke, Mark and John by conferring with John Mc Cray, professor of New Testament and Archaeology at Wheaton College. To Strobel, archaeology may project similar light on the evidence as serology and toxicology provide for the crime scene in the present day. Luke's credibility had been questioned following identification of Lysanias as tetrarch in Abila near Damascus and of *politarchs*, who were unknown in Roman documents. Archaeologists have located evidence to support Luke's credibility in both instances. Similar digs in the region have established the reliability of John and Mark (Strobel 1998, 132).

Of particular interest to Biblical scholars is the absence of information from archaeological digs to support the *Book of Mormon*. McRay quotes the Smithsonian to support this claim, considering the New Testament to be "accepted as a remarkably accurate source book" (Strobel 1998, 144).

The search for validity in the person of Jesus continues through the "behaviour reflecting personality" concept of psychological profiler John Douglas, who was able to accurately describe the character of the actual San Francisco serial killer portrayed in "Silence of the Lambs" by "left-behind products of the person's behaviour" (Strobel 1998, 175). In support of this theory,



methodology of professor Ben Witherington III, scholar of Christology at Asbury Theological Seminary was the target of Strobel's questions. To Strobel's question about and identity crisis in his life, Witherington denies such with the affirmation only of points of confirmation: at Jesus' baptism, temptation, and Transfiguration. He concluded that confirmation of Jesus' identity came real in the minds of his disciples following the crucifixion, that Jesus had performed the work of God (Strobel 1998, 184-188).

The arguments continue in logical fashion as the book's author finds answers to such questions as: Was Jesus crazy when he claimed to be the Son of God? (profile evidence). Did Jesus fulfill the attributes of God? Did Jesus and Jesus--alone--match the attributes of God? (fingerprint evidence). The resurrection is researched similarly through interviews with contemporary Biblical scholars. In the end, Strobel concludes that the evidence is heavily weighted in favor of Christ. He asks similar consideration of the reader, but in case the evidence is inconclusive, he suggests continued investigation from "respected experts." He concludes that it is vital that the reader not accept Jesus as only a great moral Teacher, but to "fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God (Strobel 1998, 365-367). Thus, his bias against the Christ seems to have shifted to apologist, who would find agreement with all those whom he has so carefully confronted with some antagonism throughout his search for veritable information. Perhaps, the shift begins to occur during the interview with Alexander Metherell, M.D., Ph. D., radiologist, physiologist, and engineer. The reader should be forewarned that this physician leaves nothing to chance in establishing the cause of death of Jesus Christ.

The book covers a wide range of methodologies for gathering data, comparing, contrasting, and analyzing it according to the means available now and at time the Gospels were written. The author's need to search for such information speaks to the similar longings of the reader, perhaps justification enough for writing such a novel. Certainly, nothing seems left to conjecture in the mind of this theorist. Above all, once certain hypotheses have been clearly proven, he is accepting of the conclusions as fact. But he does not exclude the possibility that he may have overlooked some facet of the search for truth within the records of what is known of the Christ. He encourages the reader to embark upon a similar quest for evidence.

Marigold Marsh

Michael Ruse, ed., *Philosophy of Biology*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1998. ix + 370 pp., paper, \$22.00.

If you have slipped behind in your reading on the contemporary debates in biology, or the acknowledged difficulties in neo-Darwinian explanations of the origin and nature of life, of species, and evolution, or if you want to catch up on the overlapping issues between biology and religion – on life, design, sociobiology, ethics, God and cloning, this collection of essays can be very helpful. The volume identifies 13 topics in the academic discipline of Philosophy of Biology, and collects 37 previously published essays from biologists, philosophers and theologians – past and present. The essays are filled with engaging facts, inferences, competing explanations, arguments, theorizing and speculations. Some of the chapter topics directly engage theological terrain: Evolution and Ethics, God and Biology, and Cloning, as well as the enduring

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questions of What is life? and the need of Explaining Design. There are also topics of more refined intramural biological debate, which, complex as they may be in details, nonetheless show the outsider several of the acknowledged problems in Darwinism and neo-Darwinism. The problems include contrasting views on Darwinism and the Tautology Problem (is natural selection just a conceptual way of interpreting the relationship between biological species, or is that turns out to be only a truth by definition – a non-empirical proposition – hence a fatal flaw in Darwinism?); The Challenge of Punctuated Equilibrium (one of the most prominent challenges to the orthodox and neo-Darwinian theory of slow gradual change, from the pen of Stephen J. Gould and others); The Problem of [Species] Classification (we observe distinctly different kinds of animals – snakes, fish, birds, rabbits, humans – not a seamless continuum of imperceptibly different life forms, which fuels the unresolved problem of the definition of a “species”); Teleology (must a Darwinian reject all notions of design and purpose – say, of the eye of a scavenger, because modern science [naturalism and/or atheism] requires it, or to the contrary, must a biologist be a teleologist in order to have any story to discover and explain?). Finally, the topic of Human Sociobiology is not yet on your radar screen, the three articles in this volume can serve as good icebreakers. Sociobiology is one of the most intently discussed topics in evolutionary studies, having already spawned evolutionary ethics and evolutionary psychology. It is a topic that continues to grow in influence upon, and penetration into, the contemporary mind.

Ruse provides an informative and critical Introduction (pp.1-26) to the essays, as well as a helpful annotated bibliography of this relatively new academic discipline of Philosophy of Biology (pp. 363-370). Three articles are from theologians, i.e., William Paley, Arthur Peacocke, and Philip Hefner. Biologists and philosophers are responsible for the rest, although in some cases an author's atheism may prove to be the determining factor, e.g., Richard Dawkins and J.I. Mackie. There is little space granted to theistic evolution, creation science is represented by a selection from the 1981 State of Arkansas Act 590 and Ruse's critique of it as “the ultimate fraud.” There is no essay in the volume arguing for intelligent design theory.

Two examples of the engaging nature of the essays are noted here. The topic of God and Biology includes the panentheistic argument by Arthur Peacocke. He reasons that any view of God as Creator and Sustainer of the world, given biological evolution, “impels us to take more seriously and more concretely than hitherto the notion of the immanence of God-as-Creator – that God is the Immanent Creator *creating in and through the process of the natural order...* [such that] ‘The processes themselves, as unveiled by the biological sciences, are God-acting-as-Creator, God *qua* Creator.’” (p. 339) Here there is no irreconcilable conflict between God and evolution, rather one is directed to discover the seamless activity of God in the fact of biological evolution. This seamless merging of Darwinism and divine activity of creating new life forms does, however, create a massive rip in moral nature of God. That is to say, the incalculable amount of pain, suffering, death, and mass extinctions of most of the life forms that ever came into existence over millions of years must also be understood to be God-acting-as-Creator, too.

On the topic of Evolution and Ethics, an essay by Ruse and E. O. Wilson provides a sociobiological link between these two realms. They argue that evolution has made us via natural selection and survival of the fittest, yet we now find altruism and beneficence to be constituent of human (and humane) society. Christianity teaches such a morality, but God stands behind it.

Simon on the Mount. Sociobiology (or maybe it is time to distinguish atheistic and theistic sociobiology, as is common in distinguishing atheistic and theistic forms of Existentialism) shows only naturalistic causes and explanations of phenomena, including morality. Thus, ethical claims have no ultimate objective foundation; but evolution makes us think that such foundations exist. "Evolution tricks us into beliefs about objectivity, and therefore, in this sense, morality is only a collective illusion of our species!" (p. 24, 316).

Howard M. Ducharme, University of Akron

Hann Christoph Arnold, *Why Forgive?*. The Plough Publishing House, 2000.

Arnold's book is not an easy one to read because it touches reality quickly and does not go! For who among us is not tempted to seek revenge, to deny forgiveness? Perhaps the most effective way to discuss forgiveness of another is to share the stories of people who have struggled with the effects of violent crime, abuse, bigotry and war. The author shares human stories of people who now reap the benefit of forgiveness and the stories of those who have been unable to cope in a healthy manner with great injustice.

Forgiveness of others is simple in one sense, and complex in another. In a day and age when we cry out for 'closure' for families of victims of heinous crimes, one finds the message of this book to at least bring important matters for consideration. Individuals interviewed for the book have varied ways of dealing with their hurt.

The author addresses many ways in which people are hurt. Somewhere in the book the reader will be touched with a familiar situation. Forgiveness of others is one aspect of forgiveness. For others God needs to be forgiven. And, then, there is the matter of forgiving oneself.

In a familiar style to many books, each chapter begins with an appropriate quote to the specific subject faced in the chapter. This Chinese proverb cited capsulizes the book's message and challenge: 'Whoever opts for revenge should dig two graves.' The real life examples of this book allow the reader to not feel the object of many 'oughts' and 'shoulds' and 'shall nots' but rather provide the opportunity to listen in to another human being as he or she struggles with forgiveness issues.

A certain strength of this book is the wide variety of people who contribute their honest feelings and struggles. One senses that the author himself does not look at the subject merely from an objective standpoint but is personally involved in the daily process of forgiveness and reconciliation. This book can be recommended by pastors to those who are struggling with such issues.

Cliff Stewart



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Dean Merrill, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry Church: Finding a Better Way to Influence Culture*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997. 183 pp., paper, \$12.99.

In the course of Israel's history she encountered two approaches to her as a vassal foreign powers. Assyria and Babylonia used a policy of violence and exile, intimidating nations which they conquered into grudging compliance. Persia, on the other hand, felt it easier to exercise control over happy subjects, so allowing them to return to their ancestral homes where they were able to live in more peaceful coexistence. Dean Merrill in this intriguing book points out that in practical terms, Christians, who should be known by love and peace, act toward those with whom they disagree in society at large more like pillaging Assyrians than conciliating Persians. (Though he does not mention it in this volume, it should be noted that Christians seem to treat their own brothers and sisters with whom they disagree in even a more violent, and violent manner).

One chapter title in particular summarizes Merrill's interest in the book: the Christian stance in a fallen society. He addresses elements of the fallenness of society and various ways Christians do, and should respond. I found a number of points striking, but one which I found most telling was the use of distortion and half-truths by Christians to support their views against those, especially the news media, who they consider being truth-distorters. One wonders if the Christian faith is so weak that its practitioners need to resort to other than Christian means to defend it.

The book is challenging and readable. It deserves discussion in churches and classrooms, and might find a place in adult discussion groups or even a Sunday school class for thinking believers (something which should not be, though all too often is, an oxymoron).

David W. Baker

Kenton C. Anderson, *Preaching with Conviction: Connecting with Postmodern Listeners*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2001. 160 pp., paper, \$10.99.

Eager to read a mystery novel combined with a practical lesson on writing a sermon—if so, this is your kind of book! Of course, it is difficult to imagine how such a combination can occur, but it does in this book by Kent Anderson who attempts to tackle in practical form what it means to preach to our postmodern culture. Anderson, in fact, practices what he preaches as he teaches via a story an intriguing way of writing a sermon that touches the hearts of modern listeners.

Propositions have to be made in sermons, but the author rightly notes they are not the best place to start. "If the task is to connect the listeners with the text and engage them with the sermon, it might be better to think in terms of the people rather than the principles." Presented are some clever progressions for one to keep in mind in the sermon writing process. 1. So what? (Tell the story.) 2. What's what? (Make the point.) 3. Yeah, but... (Engage the problem.) 4. Now what? (Imagine the difference.)



The reader will appreciate the many quotations from noted homiletics that add spice to the discussion. One would recommend this book to pastors who would like some creative work to the sermon constructing process.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, Texas

Stt Moreau, Harold Netland, and Charles Van Engen, eds., *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000. 1068 pp., \$60.00.

Having done well with Evangelical dictionaries in theology, counseling, and homiletics, Baker Books continued the trend with one on missions. No comprehensive missions dictionary had been published since 1971, and so much has changed in missions history and practice in the last three decades. Thus the publishers have provided a much-needed resource and could realize good sales.

It is an Evangelical dictionary in terms of the interpretative point of view rather than in subjects covered. Thus articles cover mission histories of work done also by Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and mainline Protestant denominations. Writers from these traditions have authored some of the articles. Adventists, Pentecostals and Charismatics are accepted under the general Evangelical umbrella, though they would have been suspect three decades ago.

The two greatest indicators of the dictionary's Evangelical perspective are the list of the contributors and the theological topics that are included. A great majority of the writers come from schools and mission agencies associated with Evangelical constituencies. The theology articulated comes predominantly from the Reformed heritage, though it is irenic in tone.

Anabaptist, Wesleyan, and Pentecostal perspectives are not well represented in the doctrinal articles of the volume, though these traditions represent sizeable constituencies within American Evangelicalism. Why topics of systematic theology were included is not always apparent, since their missiological implications frequently were not developed.

It is a comprehensive (though not exhaustive) treatment of missions in terms of representative biographies, country and continent surveys, country and agency histories, mission theory and practice, and Evangelical reflection on all of the above, in over 1400 articles. Of the 13 persons included, 105 are women, and 92 are non-Western. The article on Third World women by Sakki Athyal, for example, is outstanding. Geographical articles in general are good. The articles by Mark Shaw on Africa, and Bong Rin Ro on North and South Korea, William Taylor on Latin America, and Roger Schroeder on Oceania, among others that could be mentioned, are excellent. Conversely, articles on Eritrea, Estonia, the Falkland Islands, and similar small countries, are so brief that one wonders why they were included. A person could do well with Patrick Johnstone's *Operation World*.

My personal interest in missionary biographies made these articles favorite reading. Most traditions are reflected among the selected entries. But seldom do the biographical sketches exceed one column, and most get less space. One understands the restraint on space, but do not normative figures like William Carey, David Livingstone, J. Hudson Taylor, and Mother Theresa deserve more coverage? Some contributors seemed not to be fully conversant with the people

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about whom they were writing. The article on Eli Stanley Jones, for example, does not even cite Jones' autobiography *A Song of Ascents* in its suggested bibliography. In the interest of historical trivia, it would be nice to know who was really the first single woman to arrive in the foreign mission field. Three articles in the dictionary make claims for different contestants: Cynthia Farrar (pp. 355-356), Sarah Gorham (p. 401), and a Miss Newell who married Karl F. Gutzlaff (p. 422).

Evangelical missiology has come into prominence in the last three decades. Perhaps that is the reason that the many articles on mission theory, practice, and strategy are so helpful. History, anthropology, and sociology are applied to questions of missions in the present context. One senses the tensions within the missionary enterprise: between "church growth" theories and "indepth evangelism" strategies; among advocates for "proclamation", "presence" or "holistic mission priorities; between "mission agency", established churches and "independent, native churches; and between "word-centered" missions and "Spirit-centered" evangelism. The dictionary is quite even-handed on these questions, and, when evaluative statements are made, they tend to be balanced. For students and practicing missionaries, these articles may be the most helpful.

As is to be expected in a work of this magnitude, there are typographical errors and occasionally factual errors. Among these are the following: the Evangelical Lutheran Church most certainly did not establish a presence on the Faeroe Islands in the "mid-eighth century" (p. 351); Count Zinzendorf welcomed the Moravian exiles, the Unity of the Brethren, to his Herrnhut estate and not the Dutch semi-monastic group the "Brethren of the Common Life," as the article on the History of Missions asserts (p. 444); one of the three divisions of Poland which destroyed its political unity did not happen in "1975" (p. 762); J. Oswald Sanders did die in 1980 as the article on him states, but the dates after his name incorrectly read "1902-92" (p. 852); George Whitefield is incorrectly identified as a "Scottish evangelist" (p. 1015); and the article on Zimbabwe cites African and mixed race evangelists from South Africa as coming to Mashonaland in the "mid-twentieth century" before the British political presence was established in 1890 (p. 1044).

As the Preface of the dictionary indicates (p. 7), the volume is written for a popular rather than an academic audience. However, students, pastors, and missionaries will find it quite helpful for introductory articles on a wide range of mission subjects. Given the priority of missions among Evangelical groups, this dictionary should have long and satisfactory use among its intended audience. I would hope that it does well enough to merit a second edition where errors could be corrected and weaknesses could be addressed.

The highest recommendation I can give the book is to recount my own experience reading it for this review. I found myself captivated by the entries and read two to three times more articles than the usual sample to review a dictionary or encyclopedia. The book does capture one's interest; what more needs to be said?

Luke L. Keefer,

Stephen H. Webb, *Taking Religion to School: Christian Theology and Secular Education*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2002. \$20.00.

Stephen Webb's book along with George Marsden's, *The Soul of the American University* and Bruce Kuklick and D. G. Hart, eds, *Religious Advocacy and American History* test to the growing interest in the confessional voices increasingly heard in the academy. For part, Webb argues that the teaching of religion has always been and must be a particularistic religious activity. With the advent of postmodernism, claims of this sort seem almost as banal as they are ubiquitous. Webb goes beyond this simple truism, however, to claim that self-conscious religious and theological particularity is not only consonant with the nature of religion itself, but in the mandate of the secular academy, and the religious lives of the students and instructors to inhabit it.

Webb disputes the notions that confession has no place in the secular academy, that it will unleash antagonisms barely suppressible under more objectivist pedagogies, and that a professionally-sensitive pedagogy cannot be distinguished from advocacy. Of particular note is his argument that religious stridency, which is often attributed to fundamentalists of various sorts, arises, in part, from the emasculating silence imposed on theological reflection in western public life. Since many are only exposed to a generic, theologically-evacuated caricature of religion, they are ill-prepared to deal with the substantive theological issues which routinely emerge in the interaction of various religious communions in pluralistic societies. Webb's counterarguments deal carefully and successfully with these concerns.

Webb suggests several pedagogical strategies that can be used to encourage confessing voices in the Religious Studies classroom. He insists that no student should be compelled to confess his or her religious (or non-religious) views, but space must be made for these expressions nonetheless. Because religion itself is ineradicably particular, it is critical that Religious Studies' pedagogies exemplify this fact. Students should be invited to role-play as religious believers and exercise their "religious imaginations" in the attempt to sympathetically "play out" the experiences of a believer from the inside.

For all its virtues, Webb's account would have been strengthened if he had reflected more systematically on the nature of religion. He is by no means oblivious to our Enlightenment heritage, especially its withering attack on localism, confessionalism, and particularity. But has he adequately reckoned with the massive reconceptualization of religion that occurred in the Enlightenment and in the pietistic, romantic, and evangelical reactions to it? For example, can religiously meaningful confession even exist in formal settings composed in part of unbelieving strangers? It seems that it can only if confession can be plausibly construed as simply asserting doctrinal propositions or personal religious experiences.

But what sense can be made of a confessing classroom pedagogy if confession can only be situated in corporate and liturgical settings? It is surely instructive that the classic creeds of Christendom confess before all else that it is *we* who believe. It seems that ecclesiologies as diverse as Friedrich Schleiermacher's and the Eastern Orthodox Church's must challenge *any* presentation of their faith in propositions abstracted from communal and liturgical contexts. Webb's nuanced account does not totally ignore this type of classic confessionalism; nevertheless, the academic setting in which religious views must be expressed clearly favors the



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propositional theory of religious confession and its derivative, personal confession. Webb is surely correct in affirming that the nature of religion ought to govern religious pedagogy. But is it not also true that an academic pedagogy confines what is meant by religion to contestable, rationally-construed, doctrinal propositions and their close cousins, personal religious experiences, which can only enter the classroom if they too are formalized as contestable propositions.

In the aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Towers, it was instructive to note the apologetic tactics used by those who defended Islam. Most western experts pointed to Koran's doctrinal strictures against these terrorist acts in their attempt to distance radicalism from mainstream Islam. What was particularly interesting, however, was the desire of many Islamic leaders to defend their religion by inviting interested parties to their temples. This "non-modernist" gesture was very important in that it assumed that Islam can only be exemplified in communal life; it can only be truly confessed in the enriched environment of its visible manifestation. Ultimately, every religion depends on a community of believers who treat each other and those around them in ways that make aberrant behaviors implausible expressions of what is being manifest elsewhere.

In the clamor to re-gain admittance into the postmodern academy, it would be ironic if confessing communions were admitted only insofar as they are rendered in terms of doctrinal and personally-experiential modes of expression. Communitarian epistemologies, ontologies, and ways of life must be severely attenuated if they are to successfully compete for pedagogical attention. Regrettably, Webb's pedagogy does not seem to have scrutinized its own implicit theology of formal institutions and their rationalizing processes nor how they may, quite apart from the intentions of the instructors or students, cast religious life into a mold fashioned out of the very bowels of modernity.

Joel L. From, Briercrest Bible College

*The Leadership Bible, New International Version.* Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1998. 1679 pp., paper, \$24.99.

The NIV Leadership Bible is one in a sea of different "life situation" Bibles that can be purchased from your favourite Christian book retailer. There seems to be such a plethora of these Bibles, each with its own series of notes for the reader's edification, it is getting to the point where one might roll one's eyes and ask, "Another one?"

This Bible, which is also available in hard cover, is replete with leadership tips and mini-studies, as well as a "unique home-page study system" which is laid out in three easy steps on the laminated bookmark, which comes with the Bible. One can use this method to engage the studies under the rubrics of personal development, skills, and relationships, with a great variety of sub-topics under each rubric. These studies are designed to last either one or two weeks and can be used in groups or in personal devotions. Among the "home-page" contents are studies on character, integrity, leader qualifications, wisdom, accountability, conflict management, decision-making, time management, interpersonal relationships and servant leadership – all issues that



er to people who are in leadership, either in the church or in the world. There are suggested  
ages for memorization included in each weekly study.

My own experience in following these different studies is that, while they are faithful to  
texts they are set with, they tend to apply more to those who are involved in lay leadership, in  
church or outside the church. As a pastor, I found some of the applications somewhat  
antic, but that may be why they didn't call it the "Pastoral Leadership Bible". Occasionally, I  
nd that the hermeneutics were stretched a bit to come up with the leadership principles that are  
lied, particularly in the Old Testament. However, if one is prepared to overlook these – and  
y may merely show a theological bias – the other features of this Bible that foster the  
lication of Christian leadership principles in daily life outshine the parts which one might  
sider controversial.

Studies of different Bible characters are also available in this Bible. For example,  
rounding Genesis 14, there is a brief (12-line) commentary on the life of Melchizedek. The  
tors comment on what is known biblically about Melchizedek, and close with an application  
leaders: "Melchizedek met Abram's physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Often the best  
membered leaders are those who graciously serve the individuals who comprise their team.  
lchizedek points us to Jesus not only as a priest and king, but also as a servant leader" (p. 18).

The paperback version is bound surprisingly well, and sits open without a great deal of  
uggle, except at the front and back. It is somewhat heavy, as these sorts of study Bibles tend to  
but this is necessary because of all the "extra" notes that have been placed in it.

I would commend this Bible particularly to those who are in leadership positions  
side the church. The kind of person who comes to mind is the man or woman who is  
ponsible for making significant decisions in his or her job, and needs to be able to do so with  
egrity and good ethical practice – something we would wish for anyone in leadership, but  
pecially Christians in the workplace. *The NIV Leadership Bible* is another useful tool in  
aking disciples for Jesus Christ.

Jeffrey F. Loach

alter R. Hearn, *Being a Christian in Science*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997. 178  
., paper.

We live now in what might be called the Era of the Glimpse of God, in a new epoch  
hered in by the serendipitous discovery of the Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation in  
ly, 1963, for which the Nobel Prize in physics was awarded in 1978 (on the discovery, cf. Hugh  
oss, *The Creator and the Cosmos: How the Greatest Discoveries of the Century Reveal God*  
ed.; Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1995], *passim*). Since at least 1965 it has been understood  
at this discovery signaled humankind's first glimpse at the beginning of the cosmos, implying  
en to many agnostics that if the universe began, the existence of a Beginner was more than just  
attractive speculation. When in 1992 the "greatest discovery in the history of mankind" was  
hieved (so Stephen Hawking) clarifying details of this radiation, a discovery which one  
ysicist described as "looking at the face of God" (so George Smoot), the personal concepts  
plicit in the new era became even more understandable throughout the world.

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It is in this light then that the helpful thoughts of Hearn's book should be examined. goal is to assure a young person who may consider a career in science, or a theological student who might like to understand better how modern science works, that positive contributions can be made to both the Christian and the scientific communities and that this can be done with joy (2). Hearn also writes in the light (or darkness) of another background. Hearn is well aware of the tragic assault against science in the public arena mounted by the dangerous pseudoscience peddled by Christian sectarians of the "Young Earthism" movement which dogmatically tout a 4000 year old cosmos, the unobserved short-term macroevolution of species following a worldwide flood, and humankind walking with dinosaurs, along with the total rejection of modern science that such claims entail. As John Polkinghorne, *Belief in God in an Age of Science* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 88, aptly observes, "The ghost of Archbishop Ussher has not been wholly exorcised from theology." Hearn alludes to the vocal devotees of this ghost on at least three occasions (16, 22, and 97). Deeply unbiblical in some of its tenets, especially in its insertion of the death of plants and animals into Romans 5:12, this embarrassing anti-scientific sect poses a tremendous national threat (so Langdon Gilkey) to the budding interest in science and technology among our nation's youth, both outside and inside of formal Christian education. The political tactic employed by "Young Earthism" is deliberately divisive, pillorying the entirely appropriate naturalistic methods of experimental science as atheistic, disingenuous, failing to distinguish in methodology between theory and fact, surreptitiously taking scientific comments out of context to exaggerate, while at the same time bombastically claiming the imprimatur of "True Science and Education" for its devotional pamphleteering! All of this regrettably forces sincere Christian young people to choose between ungodly science and "inerrant Bible." The discouragement and distortions Christian young people face due to the sectarian influence in many churches and in the thinking public at large (where, alarmingly, the pseudoscientifically based movement is often associated with the intellectual worth of Christianity itself), when considering a career in science or when reflecting upon the connection between their faith and science, need to be met by books like Hearn's *Being a Christian*, as well as by objective critiques of the sect and its philosophical underpinnings (as in, for example, Ronald Numbers, *The Creationists: The Evolution of Scientific Creationism* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992]; Robert Pennock, *Tower of Babel: The Evidence Against the New Creationism* [Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1999]; Steven Weinberg, *Facing Up: Science and Its Cultural Adversaries* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001]); and, from a liberal theological perspective, Langdon Gilkey, *Blue Twilight: Nature, Creationism, and American Religion* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001]).

Hearn is under no illusion about the fact that he is on the battlefield for the Christian mind and is concerned that its potential influence for much good in the scientific and technological world should not be lost to coming generations. He wants to explain the methods of science, that they are restricted to physical cause and effect (17, 38), and that in deciding which science is the right career path you should keep in mind that "Christian behavior is rooted in biblical precepts and in loyalty to Jesus Christ" (40). If a young person feels called into a career in science (or, I might add, wants to investigate its experimental results), Hearn offers assurance: "If scientific work is your calling as a Christian, you will be welcomed into a wonderful family."

(J. Hearn advocates looking to God in the face of temporal pessimism, letting the optimism generated from eternity help you serve here and now in the way you are called.

The opportunity to be a witness within the scientific community is greater in the new era than ever before and Hearn is right both to detect and to encourage this. As an example, he cites the work of professed agnostic astronomer Robert Jastrow, formerly director of NASA, whose book, *God and the Astronomers*, is so widely read. Like many scientists, Jastrow rejects Einstein's impersonal God of rational order but is not sure on how to proceed. Hearn argues that Jastrow needs prayer, not condemnation (well aware that many famous scientists have unjustly been personally attacked by Christian sectarians) for holding naturalistic presuppositions, "Who knows, perhaps in Robert Jastrow the Son of God will live – before the sun dies" (97). If I may, I would like to insert a personal testimony. I was once present in a conversation with Nobel laureate Richard Feynman at the University of California at Irvine, where Feynman had just delivered a memorial lecture. A physics colleague of mine there cordially presented Feynman with a genuine Christian witness. Feynman demurred, saying that he could detect nothing about the universe to suggest the existence of God. However, I suspected then that Feynman was confused about how some Christians could be intellectually credible and seek to reject modern scientific methods, replacing them with fantastic philosophical speculation. A stumbling block had been placed in his way about what Christianity was and he never recovered from it. Feynman died shortly thereafter. Now, in the new era, the opportunity to be a Christian witness in the scientific community is very much enhanced and ever increasing because the entire climate of skepticism is being influenced in a positive way by new experimental discoveries. If Christian young people respond to God's calling to enter science, in careers like astronomy, biochemistry, geology, paleontology, paleobiology (where the macroevolution of hominids to modern man does not at all have to be accepted as an assured experimental result given recent DNA evidence from Neanderthal fossil), and physics, for example, they will have the opportunity to make new discoveries that affect humankind for the better and have the further satisfaction of being a respectable Christian witness used of God.

While the concept of spiritual life is foreign to science itself because it deals with only measurable physical properties, the Christian in science can develop spiritual life via fellowship with the Holy Spirit and through learning Scripture. A Christian in science will not be in an isolated position. There are good journals, like *Science & Christian Belief*, to help, as well as a number of theology and science groups (107-110, 126, and 137). Hearn includes a little exhortation on "The Bible and Science" that is timely (117-19). Hearn further urges that a Christian's life in science can be one of adventure and fulfillment; he gives his own convincing testimony to that effect.

Hearn cites a few examples of Christians in science (and theology) who extend their witness to the general public, like astronomer/pastor Hugh Ross, whose "writing and speaking have helped to demonstrate to conservative Christians that big bang cosmology and an ancient earth are compatible with a faithful reading of the Bible" (137), and like Robert C. Newman, whose "Progressive Creationism" in J. P. Moreland and John Mark Reynolds (eds.), *Three Views on Creation and Evolution* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999], 105-33, is worthy of perusal, and the responses to it by Walter L. Bradley (134-36) and Vern S. Poythress (148-52) in *Three Views*.



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Hearn offers a useful set of notes to each chapter and a good working list of references which also might have included Nathan Aviezer, *In the Beginning: Biblical Creation and Science* (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV, 1990) and, with apologies for mentioning my own work, "Bible Creation and Science: A Review Article," *JETS* 39/2 (1996), 289-91.

I highly commend *Being a Christian in Science* to theological students who may want to explore the methodology of the physical (natural) sciences. There is no need for Christians to fear the experimental findings of modern science; rather there is an emerging realization of harmony with a literary interpretation of the Bible. There is a need, however, for all Christian students to understand what science is and what it is not. Hearn is helpful here as is John Rennie, "Fifteen Answers to Creationist Nonsense," *Scientific American* 287/1 (2002), 78-85 (81, 82), who fairly observes, from the physical cause and effect perspective of science alone, that "The origin of life remains a mystery" and that "A critical tenet of modern science is methodological naturalism – it seeks to explain the universe purely in terms of observed or testable natural mechanisms." Being a Christian in science, if you become a cell biologist or a paleobiologist, for example, does not mean that you have to agree with the arguments of a John Rennie, but you might want to present other plausible interpretations of the available evidence. Being a scientist or desiring to understand the experimental findings of modern science from a sound theological perspective will not conflict with Christian convictions and biblical faith. In fact there are influential venues in the new era for Christians in science to honestly and professionally present cogent arguments based on experimental findings and scientific methods (not on religious speculation as a replacement for the very successful scientific methodology that underpins our technology, our military, and our industrially based economy), arguments which suggest an active role for the biblical God. In doing this, Christians in science will keep in mind that such potentially persuasive arguments will fall short of formal proof, given God's desire to remain invisible and to let His power and divinity be inferred by those who will thoughtfully contemplate His creation (Romans 1:20).

Christians in science today, like Hearn, are concerned for their Christian testimony and do not want to be lumped together with sectarian activities which are widely regarded as against the public trust, as recently illustrated by the Iowa Academy of Science's Position Statement on Pseudoscience for the public good: "Pseudoscience is a catch-all term for any mistaken or unsupported beliefs that are cloaked in the disguise of scientific credibility. Examples include assertions of 'scientific creationism,' the control of actions at a distance through meditation, and the belief in levitation, astrology, or UFO visitors." Every young person contemplating whether God would like him or her to study science and every theology student who would like to better understand how all of those programs on television (like Paleoworld and the Discovery Channel) can fit productively into practical ministry should take time to pray and study the Bible using sound hermeneutical methods. Hearn's book will be a very welcome complement to such valuable and worthwhile endeavors.

Paul Elbert, Visiting Professor of Theology and Science  
Church of God Theological Seminary



at E. Alexander and Marsha Ann Tate, *Web Wisdom: How to Evaluate and Create Information Quality on the Web*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999. 156 pp., \$50.

With the phenomenon of millions of web sites popping up daily, we, as web users, need to be able to apply great wisdom to ensure that what we place on the web will be found, read, and used. Second to this, with all this information available to us in microseconds, we need wisdom to discern what is valuable information and what is garbage. (If you are uncertain of the amount of garbage out in cyberspace, do a simple search and marvel at the number of hits you receive!)

This book, *Web Wisdom*, is information to both the user of the web and a web page producer. Janet Alexander and Marsha Tate are reference librarians at Widener University's Hargrett-Memorial Library. Using this experience, they apply the evaluation method used for printed material to the web. The main idea of this book is to apply critical techniques to the web that those we would normally apply to other written materials. By applying these critical techniques to web pages, web masters are prepared to present information that is reliable and trustworthy.

*Web Wisdom* helps web users understand the complex issues that arise from the information that is published non-traditionally via the web. One major issue the book addresses is the need to be people of discernment. Anyone can publish on the web in contrast to traditional printed material. As such, this book takes the evaluation methods of printed material (accuracy, objectivity, currency, objectivity, and coverage) and demonstrates how differently these are applied to written, published works than to web material. What we have taken for granted in the printed world, we seem to ignore in the web world. Being critical evaluators of web information is key to how we use and repeat information we obtain from the web.

Another valuable component of this book is the discussions on the types of web pages and the purposes for which they are created. By understanding why people create pages and the types of pages that reside on the web i.e., advertising, advocacy, information, personal, and entertainment, we are better able to create pages that serve the purposes we intended.

As an instructor in the field of technology and ministry, I have been presented with great challenges of deciphering information found on the web. My goal, with the help of this book, is to create responsible web users and web page developers. Students need to understand how the information they process from the web can hurt their own credibility and the credibility of their churches and ministries.

I would encourage anyone who uses the web, either for information or for promotion of their organization, to understand the key elements of evaluation of web pages and web sites. This book is a wonderful resource and one that I will encourage other faculty, students, and members of my family to read. We all need to become responsible purveyors of accurate information.

Vickie Taylor

## Reviews

Andrew Careaga, *eMinistry: Connecting with the Net Generation*. Grand Rapids: Krey Publications, 2001. 216 pp., paper, \$10.99.

With all the attention given to the Internet, both negative and positive, it is refreshing to have a book written to assist people in ministry with decisions about how to use the Internet effectively. *eMinistry* is a practical book that shows us that the Internet can be used successfully in reaching the unchurched. We can dispel many of our fears about the Internet and find ways to enhance ministry while not sacrificing community for the sake of the computer.

Careaga spent time researching this topic by talking with people from many walks of life, interviewing theologians, pastors, missionaries, teenagers, technology gurus, and frequent NetSurfers. What he discovered was surprising and encouraging to all who have reservations about the effectiveness of the Internet in today's ministries. He has even included at the end of every chapter valuable web links for them.

Regardless of whether we are ready or not, people are using the Internet as a means of finding information and developing communication. If the church decides to bypass this form of technology, we will find ourselves outside of the communication loop. As Careaga writes, "Will the church be there for online seekers with a message of salvation and hope? Or will we choose instead to ignore the impact of this new medium and let other belief systems influence the hearts and minds of the Net surfers" (p. 35)? The "itching ears" of the eGeneration are searching for something to "hear." What will they find?

To assist those who are interested in Internet ministry, this book offers resources and information geared toward understanding and developing a successful Internet ministry. The book is presented in two parts; the first addresses the characteristics of the net-generation, and the second explores the online world. Careaga is careful to address both the drawbacks and the benefits of the Internet ministry.

If you are wondering whether Internet ministry is right for your church, *eMinistry* is a must read for you. I am using this book in our "Technology in Ministry" class to give pastors and church leaders useful information regarding their ministry settings.

Vickie Taylor

Mark Stover, ed., *Theological Librarians and the Internet: Implications for Practice*. New York/London: Haworth Information Press, 2001. 201 pp., hardcover, \$59.95.

One of the most significant innovations of the late twentieth century has been the democratization of information through computer technology. Once the exclusive domain of large institutions, the impact of the integrated circuit in decreasing computer size, along with the development of the graphical user interface (GUI) to make computers user friendly has moved information technology from the exotic to the mundane. The result for libraries and librarians, as well as library users, has been profound. Yet, how much has this new technology affected theological libraries? How effectively are theological librarians using the new technologies? Do the new technologies mean that we can do away with the traditional humanities library in general and the theological library in particular?

While these greater philosophical questions are not addressed in *Theological Librarians and the Internet*, the nuts and bolts issues of how librarians may make effective use of the technology is discussed in great, if not, for the non-professional, agonizing detail. The essays included in the book are: "Internet Shock, Change, Continuity, and the Theological Librarian," by Mark Stover (pp. 1-12); "Religious and Theological Journals Online: The ATLA Serials Collection Project," by Mark Dubis (pp. 13-15); "The Function of Web Catalogs in Theological Libraries," by John Dickason (pp. 17-43); "Electronic Journals in Religious Studies: Theological Libraries Prepare for the Digital Future," by Marshall Eidson, (pp. 45-67); "Theological Distance Education: A Librarian's Perspective," by Dave Harmeyer (pp. 69-86); "The Creation of the Bash Center Internet Guide," by Charles K. Bellinger (pp. 87-96); "Homiletics and Liturgics on the Internet," by Robert R. Howard (pp. 97-104); "Accessing Digital Images: Sources for Christian Art on the Internet," by Elizabeth Davis Deahl (pp. 105-125); "Opening the Front Door: Designing a Usable Library Website," by Andrew J. Keck (pp. 127-137); "Using the Web in Religious Studies Courses," by Rebecca Moore (pp. 139-150); "Some Selected Internet Sources for Novice Researchers of Christian History," by Michael Strickland (pp. 151-160); "Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations for Web Design in Religious and Theological Academic Libraries," by Mark Stover (pp. 161-201); and, "Virtually Jewish: The Creation of a Jewish Internet Tutorial," by Terren I. Wein and Juna Z. Snow (pp. 203-214).

As in any edited volume, the articles vary in readability and in usefulness for various readers. A number of articles presuppose an understanding of library jargon. Other articles, such as those by Bellinger, Howard, Deahl, and Strickland, provide useful information and web addresses for a wide constituency. One should, however, be cautioned web addresses can change with remarkable regularity. Other articles, such as Keck's, are addressed to information professionals, but are also useful to the more general reader. Moore's essay is most helpful for teachers of religion or theology who are attempting to integrate Web resources into their classes.

Readers may be surprised to learn that, while print journals may be superseded by the advent of the web, libraries focusing upon the humanities will still need to acquire books. The reason, in part, is because of copyright law. Unfortunately, the book only touched on this issue very briefly. The restrictions of the copyright law are why many texts available at "free" sites are, in fact dated and precritical. Thus, the user finds the interesting phenomenon of the latest technology only being able to access older material.

The book fails to mention some of the great frustrations in Web searching. A chapter on boolean searching would have been helpful for the novice. Furthermore, the inadequacies of search engines are not explored. The writers assume also a certain degree of information literacy on the part of their audience.

In conclusion, while *Theological Librarians and the Internet* does not discuss all the important issues facing the theological librarian in the new information age, it is a useful introduction to some of the areas of major concern. It provides a good introduction to both the promises and problems of the Internet as applied to religious studies. Non-librarians also will find some informative articles, but should avoid the jargon-laden ones.

Russell Morton



## Reviews

Walter P. Wilson, *The Internet Church*. Nashville: Word Publishing, 2000. 174pp.

It is no secret that one of the buzz words for the church of today is "online." exactly what that means for the local church is complicated. On the one hand, we all understand that our culture has become so dependent upon the Internet that one can hardly escape its place in our homes, businesses, and churches. On the other hand, can the church effectively use this new medium to reach men and women across the world without becoming isolated and out of touch with humanity?

Wilson has done a good job of helping the general public become aware of the need to use this effective medium for spreading the gospel and touching the lives of the lost, the forgotten, and the hidden. His background prepared him to write this book. His experience as the co-founder, Chairman, and CEO for Exclaim Technologies, his heart for the lost, and his passion for the Great Commission give him the wisdom he shares with the church. Wilson shares with the church the practical advice needed to take advantage of this "global communications tool" that God has provided to the world.

Helping the church and its members to grasp the concepts of Internet usage for church purposes is not an easy task but as Wilson explains, "...this is not about technology; it's about the Great Commission and our obedience to our Creator and Redeemer" (p. 14). His thesis for this book is centered on the viewpoint that we as Christians must look at the Internet as a way in which God is moving to bring to completion His mission of having His truth proclaimed to the very ends of the earth.

Most of the book's 12 chapters help the reader understand the importance of the Internet in today's ministries. The focus is to guide us to a comfortable place in this world of fast-paced change. We all know that the church is one place where change is difficult and slow. But when it comes to getting onboard with Internet ministry, being slow can make one's ministry culturally irrelevant.

The journey through this book begins with an understanding of the call of the church, the church's inadequacies, and the faithful provision of God who calls and equips and concludes with an understanding of how we can renew and transform our ways of thinking. Wilson calls this transformation the change from "atoms to bits."

The final chapter in the book deals with practical ways in which the church can use the Internet for ministry. Wilson shares examples from his own church and stories from other churches.

If you or your church is uncertain whether Internet ministry is for you, I highly suggest reading this book. You will be gently guided through all your questions and concerns and you will have a greater understanding of your role in the world. I recommend this reading for pastors to help develop a philosophy of technology in the local church and for helping people understand the need for some form of Internet ministry.

Vickie Taylor









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VOLUME XXXV

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## Editor's Introduction

It is my pleasure once again to present to you the fruit of some of the labors being undertaken at Ashland Theological Seminary by faculty, students, and alumni. In August of 2003, the faculty met for a pre-term retreat, and the topic of discussion was 'Evangelicalism'. Ashland as an institution claims a position in that theological and sociological camp, but some among the faculty were asking what is meant by the term, and how it fits into our own self-definition. Arising from that discussion is the article by William Payne, whose interest was piqued at that, his first ATS retreat, to explore the relationship between the term 'Evangelical' and the African-American community.

Andrew Hamilton, an ATS alumnus and adjunct instructor, takes a look at another group among evangelicalism, namely the Brethren, the founders of the Seminary. He explores their early hermeneutic. Another historical study by an alumnus, Jeffrey Kahl, looks at a different concern, the Puritans, who played such an important role in American church history. He looks at them specifically through the lens of leadership. Leadership in its contemporary application to the church and its pastors is the picked up by Richard Parrott. He highlights the importance of the nurture of the pastor's inner being before there can be any meaningful outward functioning. One aspect which is important to evangelicalism is the importance of Scripture, and of doctrine derived from it. An article by Mark Hamilton highlights the importance of contending for the faith as articulated by C. S. Lewis. The articles conclude with a review by Luke Keefer of several volumes from a series on early and contemporary church history, again tying together our past and our present.

Past and present were tied together over the last year at the Seminary as well, with the retirement of two of our number, Dr Douglas Little and Dr Ronald Sprunger, whom we wish well. We are also joined by several new colleagues: ATS alumna Dr Elaine Heath as Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program, Dr John Byron as Instructor in New Testament, Dr David Mann as of Associate Professor of Counseling (starting in January, 2004), and Anthony Donofrio as Assistant professor of Counseling (starting in the fall of 2004). Robert Rosa has been promoted to the position of Dean of Student Development, and two recruiters have joined his staff, Cara Selan and Curtis Stein.

Curricular changes also continue apace, especially in the Doctor of Ministry program and the Sandberg Leadership Center. Ashland is honored to be the recipient of a Lilly grant which will establish a program called "Pastors of Excellence." This program will directly impact more than 100 churches over the next three years, and is under the direction of Dr. Richard Parrott. Another exciting new venture is The Institute of Formational Counseling at Ashland Theological Seminary, under the leadership of Dr Terry Wardle. Through workshops, seminars, speakers' forums, and other means it is destined, through God's grace, to have an impact not only here at the Seminary but throughout the nation.



## Early Brethren Hermeneutical Perspective

by Andrew S. Hamilton\*

*"So then, if some more brethren wish to begin this high act of baptism with us out of brotherly unity according to the teachings of Christ and the apostles, we announce in humbleness that we are interceding together in prayer and fasting with God."*<sup>1</sup> -Alexander Mack

### Introduction

The purpose for this paper is to define the hermeneutical perspective of the Early Brethren, which I will argue has been affected essentially by both Radical Pietism and Anabaptism. Therefore, this chapter will define and describe Radical Pietism and Anabaptism and their contribution to the Brethren identity. Special attention will be given to Vernard Eller's argument that the Brethren identity is a dialectic tension between Pietism and Anabaptism. I will argue that it is not necessary to describe the Brethren identity as a dialectic tension, nor is it appropriate to describe them as Anabaptist over against Pietist and vice versa. Finally, in this paper I will describe the Early Brethren Bible reading method that extends out of their identity.

### Hermeneutical Perspective Explained

Before this chapter can adequately answer the question, "What is the Early Brethren hermeneutical perspective?", we must first specify what is meant by "hermeneutical perspective." The phrase is made up of two distinct and significant terms which connote context and identity. The first term, "hermeneutical," denotes both the act of interpretation and that which affect one's interpretation. The term "hermeneutic(al)" has been described as referring to the principles people use to understand or interpret communicative messages regardless of form.<sup>2</sup>

The second term in the above phrase is "perspective." While "hermeneutical" refers primarily to the means of understanding, "perspective" refers to all contextual experience which affects the process of understanding. It can be

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## Early Brethren Hermeneutical Perspective

understood as synonymous with "point-of-view," as the Oxford Concise English Dictionary defines it as "a position from which a thing is viewed," or "a particular way of considering a matter."<sup>3</sup> A "perspective" or "point-of-view" consists of the values, presuppositions, and biases held by the relevant individual or community.

When used in tandem, as is the case for this chapter, "hermeneutical perspective" denotes not only the means by which an individual or community comes to understand something, but also openly acknowledges the multifaceted context of that individual or community. In addition to the external factors which affect the community's perception, more significantly internal factors exist within the community that form the core of identity and create a metaphorical lens through which the community perceives. In the context of the Early Brethren, these internal factors are the core convictions that extend from their unique narrative.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, this essay will set out to establish both the means by which the Early Brethren interpreted scripture, and the perspective or point-of-view that contributes to the creation of meaning<sup>5</sup> in the interpretive process. While establishing methodology is somewhat less difficult, establishing the point-of-view or perspective of any given community can be more challenging. As formerly defined, the perspective consists of values, presuppositions and biases held by an individual or community.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the goal of this exercise is to identify a number of conviction statements (central narrative convictions) which express the perspective of the Early Brethren community.

### **Pietist**

Concerning the perspective or point-of-view that affects the means of interpretation, there are two primary controlling factors that form the foundation of the Early Brethren identity: Pietism and Anabaptism.<sup>7</sup> It is against these two backdrops that Early Brethren must be understood. The Early Brethren movement developed immediately out of Radical Pietism. While both Pietism and Radical Pietism share some of the same characteristics, through the years historians have found it necessary to distinguish between the two. Pietism is the initial movement from which Radical Pietism developed. Therefore a brief discussion and description of Pietism and Radical Pietism is necessary. This section will propose that there are several primary characteristics that make up the perspective of the Radical Pietists which significantly affected the Early Brethren hermeneutical perspective.

### *Pietism*

Pietism is a complex movement which is extremely difficult if not

impossible to narrowly define. Historians have described it as having many branches often reflecting the teachings of particular leaders, such as Arndt, Spener, Francke, etc. Because Church Pietism merely serves as a backdrop for Radical Pietism, it is, thus, not central to the argument of this thesis. Therefore, I will offer only a summary of the aspects of Pietism that essentially affected the development of Radical Pietism and ultimately the Early Brethren. This by no means attempts to comprehensively describe Pietism.

Pietism<sup>8</sup> has been described as a "religious revival, reacting to the emotional sterility of the government sponsored and supported churches."<sup>9</sup> This is a limited description that expresses more the motivation and cause of Pietism than it provides a description of the movement. In essence Pietism is a renewal movement that began within Protestantism beginning in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It sought individual religious renewal which would extend to the renewal of church and society while emphasizing the importance of religious fellowship. Reflecting much of Francke's thought, Pietists believed that Christians must grow in faith, wisdom, good works, and must separate themselves from the "world."<sup>10</sup> In addition they worked toward establishing a biblical perspective for both a religious and ethical life. This means that they not only studied the scripture but endlessly sought to practice its principles in daily living. Pietists believed that the authentic Christian life was characterized by active ethical living. They sought complete dedication and investment of one's energies toward Christian living. This was characterized by self-examination, (daily) repentance, prayer, hearing or reading scripture, and taking part in the sacraments.<sup>11</sup> Even as the Reformers held to this same idea, the Pietists sought to live uncompromisingly and consistently according to the principles of scripture (particularly the New Testament). They strove for a distinctive lifestyle which in itself was a criticism of the religious and ethical standards held by the established churches.

Traditionally Pietism has been described through the writings of its founders, such as Spener, Arndt, Francke, etc. From these we are able to discern particular emphases and convictions which characterize Pietism. Chauncey David Ensign cites six suggestions for church renewal that are rooted in Spener's works.<sup>12</sup> These suggestions emphasize three specific ideas that epitomize Pietist thinking: the ability and necessity of the laity to study scripture, the importance of ethical living by all believers, the increased value of all believers as is expressed in "priesthood of all believers" and the focus upon laity participation regarding religious activity particularly the use of common language in all theological discussions.

In addition to these characteristics Andrew Landale Drummond offers further observations. He characterizes the Pietists by their 1) eager desire to preach

## Early Brethren Hermeneutical Perspective

a simple religion of the heart, 2) expression of immediate feelings rather than reflective study, 3) an emphasis on the second birth, 4) the fellowship created by all those who share this experience, 5) a distinction between the quality of life of the converted and those of the world, 6) devotional reading of the Bible, 7) spiritual intelligence,<sup>13</sup> 8) priesthood of all believers, 9) discipleship is not about accepting dogma but a call to holiness, philanthropy, and evangelism.<sup>14</sup> These observations recognize two additional emphases present in Pietism: the experiential nature of faith, especially in the expression of emotional response to scripture and devotion, and the second birth. Therefore from these descriptions of Pietism we come to a general understanding of its nature.

While Pietism certainly had positive effects upon Christian faith it also has been criticized as going to extremes. Dale Brown, says that Pietism "has contributed to hypocritical legalism, experiential fanaticism, narrow-minded dogmatism, and loveless separatism."<sup>15</sup> Radical Pietists used some of these same criticisms against the Anabaptists. However, unlike Anabaptism, Pietism sought not to form a new church but to renew the existing one. Pietists were inclined to complete the work started by the reformers.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, Church Pietism would need no specific theology apart from that of the church to which they belonged, because according to some substantial leaders in the movement (Spener being one), the goal was to remain in the church and work to bring renewal from the inside.

The focus of experience and emotions within the context of biblical devotion is of particular importance regarding the Early Brethren. In the fellowship of the Early Brethren we find this sense of zeal or religious fervour accompanied by a discerned conviction following scriptural study. Having intensely studied scripture as a group, and following much prayer and devotion, the group of sisters and brothers felt convicted to obey the scripture.<sup>17</sup> They became convinced to the extent of risking persecution for the need to be baptized.

Dale Stoffer's study recognizes four basic components that most scholars agree upon regarding Pietism: "(1) the new birth, (2) the new life, (3) emphasis on the Bible, (4) an optimistic call for reform."<sup>18</sup> The Pietist emphasis on "new birth" refers to both Francke's and Spener's conviction that all Christians are called to a radical change of life. For both Francke and Spener this "radical change" is not a once and for all transformation.<sup>19</sup> Instead it is a lifelong process of change. Stoffer adds, "The new birth effects a new state of being in the believer in which he is united with Christ in a psychological and volitional union."<sup>20</sup> This underscores the human role in this life changing event as being a response of faith. Pietists emphasized the new birth as the event in which God not only pardons the sin of the believer but also begins the process of transforming the life of the sinner. There is a



definite dualistic understanding in Pietism which contrasts the power of God with the power of sin.<sup>21</sup>

A direct outgrowth of a "new birth" is the "new life." This component of Pietism is based upon their idea that sanctification is a transformation of character, which is a joint working of both God and the individual. More pointedly to Stoffer's explanation, God initiates the process and provides the strength and power necessary to accomplish it.<sup>22</sup>

The source, however, for their convictions is found in the centrality of scripture. Pietists held scripture as their source of life and growth. Yet this is not the most significant aspect of this pietistic component. Pietists continued the Reformation in biblical interpretation. They sought to complete what the reformers started by seeking to "free the scripture from formalistic methods of interpretation."<sup>23</sup> For orthodoxy, the controlling factor with biblical interpretation was the creeds. Pietism sought to break the cords of the creeds freeing biblical interpretation. Both Spener and Francke assert that Scripture must be its own interpreter. "The meaning of a passage must be considered in its broader context, while difficult passages should be interpreted by those which are clear."<sup>24</sup> Stoffer points out that this was important so that the common person could become familiar with the "simple message" of scripture and order their lives accordingly.<sup>25</sup> Finally, Pietism was rooted in the German Reformation and thus possessed an optimistic sense that change within the church could occur. It was their belief that the Reformation was not finished and that more had to be accomplished.

### *Radical Pietism*

While many Pietists met in their conventicles opting to remain in the established church, some became increasingly disconcerted with the deadness in the established church and decided to separate (thus, the term "separatists") from the church. Thus it became necessary for historians to distinguish between the "moderate" Pietists, who opted to remain in the established church, and the more "radical" Pietists who left. Stoffer identifies the radical movement as "a branch of the Pietist movement which expressed its piety through channels which were mystical, spiritualistic, Boehmist, and separatistic."<sup>26</sup>

In Ensign's notable work regarding Radical Pietism, he distinguishes fourteen distinctive doctrinal beliefs that were generally held by the broad categorization of Radical Pietism. The first doctrinal belief listed is (1) *Trinitarianism*. This, according to Ensign, was only loosely held by Radical Pietists.<sup>27</sup> Boehme, who is one of the primary sources of Radical Pietist doctrinal beliefs, sought to avoid speaking of God as three persons. "For him, this one,

divine *Wesen* has revealed Himself in three forms in the process of creation."<sup>28</sup> Radical Pietists saw Trinitarian formulations as the decline of the early church.<sup>29</sup> Because of their aversion to Trinitarian terminology, Radical Pietists appear to have been modalistic in their understanding of God. The second doctrinal belief which Ensign distinguishes is (2) *Christology*. According to Ensign, some Boehmists developed a Christology which suggested that Christ was "conceived by the heavenly *Sophia*, and that he was born spiritually androgynous."<sup>30</sup> Radical Pietists also developed distinctive (3) *doctrinal beliefs concerning marriage*. While early on they elevated celibacy and considered marriage as carnal, the Radical Pietist eventually came to accept Hochmann's five point doctrine concerning marriage. This doctrine consisted of the following five levels:

- 1) The completely beastly. This occurs when men take wives like dumb beasts, purely from the sexual motive . . .
- 2) The honorable and moral, but heathenish. All legal requirements are observed, but the marriage is heathenish because the partners do not stand in covenant with God, and the marriage is entered into out of worldly considerations . . .
- 3) The Christian. Such a marriage takes place when two who are made holy through the blood of Jesus unite in married love, with the love of Christ, who loved the *Gemeine* and gave Himself for her . . .
- 4) The fourth, and more advanced grade is the *Jungfräuliche*, when two who are consecrated to God and the Lamb unite for no other purpose than to help each other to a fuller holiness by uniting their prayers, and also helping in physical need . . .
- 5) That of a soul married to the Lamb. Such a one, who has had Christ for "*Mann*," or "*Braut*," will attain the highest degree of glory in the Kingdom of Christ, and will sit on the right hand of the Messiah.<sup>31</sup>

This doctrinal belief sheds light on why some of the Early Brethren left the Germantown *Gemeinde* to join the Ephrata community which strongly held this doctrine. The Radical Pietist influence upon the Early Brethren was a real presence in the minds of the brothers and sisters. Even Alexander Mack Jr. spent some time in the Ephrata community.

Radical Pietism also reflected a (4) *nature mysticism*.<sup>32</sup> According to Ensign, Boehme was considered a nature mystic because of his openness to alchemy, astronomy, and magic.<sup>33</sup> More specifically he is considered this because: . . . for him the universe is regarded as a total organism, of which man is the *microcosm* B the epitome B or concentration of the universe; the universe, or

*macrocosm*, is an extension and development of that which exists in man in a state of concentrated unity.<sup>34</sup>

Due to their openness and their understanding that God wills certain knowledge within his people, Radical Pietists were open to revelation concerning natural secrets. This is illustrated in that some, as Boehme also did, began dispensing medicine.<sup>35</sup>

Another doctrinal belief, which Radical Pietists affirmed, was (5) *Quietism*. Quietism is the mystical belief that one should wait upon God. Ensign says, "Quietism, from the turn of the eighteenth century onward, was to become, next to Boehmism, the greatest single influence in radical Pietism."<sup>36</sup> While Quietism quieted the ecstatic outward experiences of Radical Pietism, it also turned their focus inward adding a new mystical characteristic. Unfortunately its extreme resulted in an aversion to good works. In addition to Quietism, the Radical Pietists possessed a (6) *mystical theology*. By mystical theology, Ensign explains, "The pedagogical and social emphases in Pietism tended to force all forms of mysticism into one mold, denominated 'mystical theology.'"<sup>37</sup> This denominated "mystical theology" was divided into three stages of mystical experiences: purification, enlightenment, and union.<sup>38</sup> The highest elevation, of course, was union with God.<sup>39</sup>

The next doctrinal belief for Radical Pietism concerned the (7) *Bible and inspiration*. According to Ensign, Radical Pietists often interpreted scripture allegorically. Moreover, he says that they would regularly "attach mystic significance to commonplace statements."<sup>40</sup> As a consequence of this mystical emphasis, they believed that revelation was a current occurrence. This led to the belief that they too could be "inspired."<sup>41</sup> These new revelations from the Spirit were always secondary and were to supplement and agree with scripture. This would have been an empowering experience for an oppressed community. Now they could possess a greater influence in their communities. Ensign asserts that they would claim that secrets were "revealed to them in visions, dreams, and meditations."<sup>42</sup> Thus Radical Pietists had an openness to new revelation.

Additionally Radical Pietists held to the doctrinal belief of (8) *Salvation of the Heathen*. This was the understanding that the heathen have the inner word in their hearts and thus may be saved if they obey it. This means that they believed salvation could be obtained apart from the historic Christian revelation.<sup>43</sup> It asserts that God reveals himself to all people through the inner light. Therefore anyone may be saved if they follow that inner light. Regarding (9) *salvation and sanctification*, Ensign says "Boehme shared the Lutheran teaching that salvation was by grace through faith."<sup>44</sup> But unlike Luther, Boehme and the Radical Pietists

rejected any form of imputation theory. For the Radical Pietists, one must repent from sin before God can forgive it.<sup>45</sup> Salvation was not a punctiliar event. Rather, for the Radical Pietists it was a process in which Christ takes shape within the individual. However, much like the moderate Pietists an essential emphasis was placed upon rebirth. Thus the initial stage in the (10) *salvation process* is rebirth. Then following the death of the old self, the light of Christ begins to grow within the individual allowing the person to experience the life of Christ in the world.<sup>46</sup> Finally, after death, the light that was growing in the body becomes the "basis for resurrection." However, Radical Pietists would have denied a physical resurrection.<sup>47</sup>

The next doctrinal belief concerns (11) *voluntarism and predestination*. While from the human perspective, salvation was through faith, the Radical Pietists denied the Reformed doctrine of predestination that emphasized a deterministic view of God.<sup>48</sup> For Boehme, God is a loving God who wills salvation to all people.<sup>49</sup> According to Ensign, "Boehme had a hatred for the teaching of predestination, which kept even those radical Pietists of Reformed background from belief in it, and led them to oppose deterministic philosophies."<sup>50</sup> Therefore Radical Pietists would tend toward a belief that the future is open.

(12) *Sanctification* was another of the doctrinal convictions of the Radical Pietists. All Pietists emphasized sanctification. They believed that followers of Christ must "abstain from all 'worldly' ways, and from sinful amusements."<sup>51</sup> Their doctrinal belief of sanctification focused on the obedient life. One should continuously obey the commands of God. While they would suggest that this be done until perfection is achieved, it must be noted that "perfection" does not imply faultlessness. Instead, it simply implies one's continual willingness to obey the commands of God "to the best of one's knowledge and ability."<sup>52</sup>

(13) *Universalism* was also a conviction of the Radical Pietists. Their understanding of universalism was based upon the idea that all of God's actions always worked toward redemption.<sup>53</sup> This conviction extended to the belief that even God's punishments were for the purpose of redeeming souls.<sup>54</sup> There was also, however, the understanding that all people (as well as Satan and his angels) would pass through a purifying fire that would ultimately reconcile them to God.<sup>55</sup> While this was a generally held conviction, most were hesitant to proclaim this for fear that those who were not yet regenerate would resist living a holy life.

The final doctrine Ensign lists is (14) *apocalypticism*. This was a popular movement throughout the seventeenth century due to the Thirty Years' War. The war's impact left people looking for coming of their Savior. The Radical Pietists carefully recorded catastrophes and other events that were understood as judgments



from God.<sup>56</sup> However, for Boehme, there was no earthly millennium reign. Unlike the chiliastic understandings, Jesus' second coming was to be in spirit. Generally, the Radical Pietists expected the conversion of the "Jews and heathen."<sup>57</sup> Ensign states that "time-setting" was dissuaded, even though some still attempted to do so.<sup>58</sup>

While Ensign offers a thorough detailed description of the Radical Pietists, Willoughby designates them as "Pietists who had been members of a local church, but who withdrew from active participation."<sup>59</sup> In the process of distinguishing the distinctive convictions of the Radical Pietists as to Willoughby's observations, it is necessary to note that the Radical Pietist movement was "essentially a protest against the state church."<sup>60</sup> Therefore as Willoughby offers four primary convictions of the Radical Pietists, with which the Early Brethren agreed, these convictions are stated in contradiction to the state church. Moreover, his description of the Radical Pietists focuses upon Ernst Hochmann and Samuel König. The purpose of this focus is due to the direct relationship that the Early Brethren shared with Hochmann.

Between 1699 and 1700, Hochmann helped form a loosely organized fellowship called the Philadelphian fellowship or the "Society of Brothers."<sup>61</sup> Renkewitz provides six distinguishing characteristics of this new group.<sup>62</sup> Of the six distinctive characteristics as provided by Renkewitz, Willoughby says that only four were agreed upon by the Early Brethren.<sup>63</sup> Willoughby's concludes that inasmuch as the Early Brethren were influenced by the Radical Pietists, they were equally troubled by the "individualism and the lack of continuing community," which were core elements of Radical Pietism.<sup>64</sup> Donald Durnbaugh extends this conclusion in his work, *Brethren Beginnings: the Origin of the Church of the Brethren in Eighteenth Century Europe*, when he infers that the Brethren entirely left behind Radical Pietism and adopted the tenets of Anabaptism.<sup>65</sup> However, Ensign offers a contrary argument that suggests that the Early Brethren cannot be explained apart from Radical Pietism. In his argument he emphasizes the many similarities that the Early Brethren shared with the Radical Pietists. He argues that they opposed the imputation theory of atonement; they opposed the Calvinist doctrine of predestination; they objected to eating blood; etc.<sup>66</sup> Yet Ensign also acknowledges that the Anabaptists (Mennonites) also shared these beliefs. The point of the matter is that while the Early Brethren came out of Radical Pietism, they did not necessarily leave it entirely behind. Ensign rightly acknowledges the overlapping of beliefs between the Radical Pietists and the Anabaptists. Nevertheless, simply because the Early Brethren recognized the importance of community does not mean that they forfeited their Radical Pietist beliefs. The

## Early Brethren Hermeneutical Perspective

answer as to the identity (and thus the hermeneutical perspective) of the Early Brethren does not lie in either of the two points-Radical Pietism or Anabaptism. To answer this apparent dilemma, the identity of the Brethren has been characterized in recent times as a dialectic tension between (Radical) Pietism and Anabaptism.<sup>67</sup> While the two traditions share many similar beliefs, the seeming dichotomies of community/individualism, inward/outward manifestations of spirituality appear to epitomize the tension that exists within the Early Brethren.

Stoffer describes the Radical Pietists as "one of the most colorful movements in the history of Christianity."<sup>68</sup> And as such its contributions to the Brethren convictions cannot be understated. The above description of the Pietistic movement (both Radical and Church Pietism) is but a brief outline of the significant contributions to Early Brethren thought. So having thus presented this Pietistic perspective as it has affected the Early Brethren, one finds several distinctive convictions extending out of their beliefs that contribute to the Early Brethren hermeneutical perspective. Willoughby cites five convictions which contributed to the origin of Brethren beliefs:

1. The reality of religion is a spiritual experience.
2. The practice of devotional exercises.
3. The use of the Bible as the primary devotional book.
4. The Christian faith is expressed in moral behavior.
5. The Christian faith is expressed in service to those in need.<sup>69</sup>

Yet this list is not complete because it does not express their protest against the institutional church nor does it express their separatistic nature (in that they left the established church). In the institutional church they recognized corruption and oppressive systems. They observed a religion barren of spirituality. Thus they sought spiritual renewal apart from the established church. This separatist attitude spawned the individualistic nature of Radical Pietism. In addition to the recognition of conviction for renewal, Radical Pietists possessed an openness to new insights and revelations apart from scripture.<sup>70</sup>

While the Brethren clearly emerged from the Radical Pietist movement, they also rejected the mystical and spiritualistic excesses of Radical Pietism as they found them not to be consistent with scripture.<sup>71</sup> This is primarily demonstrated in Alexander Mack's treatise concerning questions raised about the Brethren *Gemeinde* by Eberhard Louis Gruber and the Inspirationists. However, elements of Pietism and Radical Pietism still existed in the Early Brethren regardless of their accepting an Anabaptist ecclesiology. Like the Pietists, the Early Brethren were critical of the established churches and of scholasticism; they studied the scriptures individually

and corporately; they possessed the Pietist zeal for devotion; early on they struggled with the issue of marriage, accepting Hochmann's doctrine; experiential faith was emphasized in their fellowship; believers were to follow Christ and obey his commands; they strongly believed in the "priesthood of all saints;" finally, while not openly preaching it, the Early Brethren held to the doctrine of universal restoration.<sup>72</sup>

### Anabaptist

While the Early Brethren identity was initially formed in Radical Pietism, they experienced a shift when they acknowledged and embraced the significance of *Gemeinde*. Stoffer states that during the last half of the eighteenth century Mennonites and Radical Pietists developed close ties.<sup>73</sup> It is generally agreed by historians that there were many similarities between the two groups.<sup>74</sup> Yet there are also differences between the two groups and each had an influence upon the Early Brethren.<sup>75</sup> Thus we now turn to the other primary aspect that constitutes the Early Brethren hermeneutical perspective-Anabaptism.

As has been established, the fundamental disposition of the Early Brethren was already founded within Radical Pietism. Thus the decision to form a *Gemeinde* was a move away from the Radical Pietist tenets of separatism and a move toward Anabaptist communalism. However, it is necessary first to discuss what is meant by the characterization "Anabaptist." Anabaptism has been defined many different ways. Some in western Christianity fail to recognize the significant and revolutionary nature of Anabaptism. This is best illustrated by the definition of Anabaptism given by mainline Protestantism.<sup>76</sup> Willoughby begins his explanation of early Anabaptism as the "unwanted child of the Reformation."<sup>77</sup> He explains that Anabaptism essentially moved within the lower classes, thus causing fear of civil uprising among the civil authorities.<sup>78</sup> This, in addition to the tragic event at Münster, resulted in the antagonistic opposition of Anabaptism by the state churches and the ruling classes. Anabaptists became a marginalized, oppressed, and persecuted people. When referring to Anabaptism, this thesis refers to those Germanic groups who emphasize radical discipleship and "who effected a church life upon what they thought to be the pattern of the primitive church."<sup>79</sup> This statement presupposes the affirmation of adult baptism upon confession of faith and the rejection of infant baptism. C. Arnold Snyder uses one of the earliest catechisms written for this movement as a means of describing it. Balthasar Hubmaier wrote this particularly interesting catechism that outlines the beliefs of the early Anabaptists. Snyder ensures that the "essentials he enumerated systematically were echoed (less systematically) by Anabaptists elsewhere."<sup>80</sup> In his



text regarding Anabaptist theology, Snyder demonstrates the general doctrinal agreement between the many branches of Anabaptism by breaking down Hubmaier's catechism into an orderly outline of Anabaptist belief and doctrine. A central factor for Anabaptism was their emphasis upon the "inner and outer" transformation and the sanctification of believers.<sup>81</sup> These radical disciples held to a stringent ecclesiology<sup>82</sup> that required outward (visible) signs of one's faith.

The question now arises as to the extent and nature of influence that the Anabaptists (specifically the Mennonites) had upon the Early Brethren. Willoughby states that there was a definite Mennonite presence in the Palatinate.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, while Mack was traveling the region with Hochmann, it is told by Mack Jr. that the two would "now and then" visit Mennonite congregations to preach.<sup>84</sup> In addition to the historical records of the Mennonite presence, there is implicit evidence as to the familiarity of the Early Brethren with the Mennonites. In his tract, "Basic Questions," Alexander Mack states that the Early Brethren agreed fully with all the doctrines of the Mennonites.<sup>85</sup> Yet regardless of the many similarities shared between the Early Brethren's pietistic background and the Anabaptists, Anabaptism still provided significant and unique effects upon the Early Brethren.

According to Harold Bender, there were three core beliefs and teachings of the Anabaptists: "first, a new conception of the essence of Christianity as discipleship; second, a new conception of the church as a brotherhood; and third, a new ethic of love and nonresistance."<sup>86</sup> While this is an oversimplification of the complex doctrines of Anabaptist beliefs, Snyder's thorough examination of Anabaptist theology can be summed up in these three statements.

In his work, Willoughby, offers some Anabaptist beliefs which he believes directly affected the Early Brethren.<sup>87</sup> However, only three of the characteristics affected the Early Brethren: the Apostolic model as the basis of the *Gemeinde*, the existential nature of faith, and the Ban. Stoffer suggests that the existential character of the Mennonites was due to several distinctive emphases: they viewed Christ as the model for the new life; they had a straightforward approach to scripture, which emphasized the Gospels rather than the Pauline epistles; they possessed a conception of soteriology that understood all aspects of conversion directed toward radical discipleship; they believed in the kerygmatic qualities of the ordinances; and they had a limited eschatology of the visible church.<sup>88</sup> Unlike the Protestant groups, the Anabaptists did not dichotomize between faith and obedience. For them faith was obedience. A central focus of their faith was "taking up one's cross and following." Thus the Anabaptists could be characterized as a *Gemeinde* organized according to the Apostolic model and whose faith was existential. The fact that Alexander Mack says, "We are completely agreed with



them as far as their doctrine is concerned, which does not teach anything in contradiction to the gospel,"<sup>89</sup> testifies to the extent of the similarities the two groups shared.

However, once again we must discern to what extent the Anabaptists affected the Early Brethren. While Mack certainly agreed with the Anabaptist doctrines, he also believed them to be an inferior fellowship.<sup>90</sup> While this denotes a difference in practice or more accurately an objection to their lifestyle, Mack qualifies this statement as being based upon their being "deteriorated in doctrine and life."<sup>91</sup> But what does he mean by this? Perhaps a clue as to the source of this statement can be found in Friedrich Arnold's criticism of the Anabaptists as Stoffer points out. Arnold criticizes the Anabaptists for their literal reading and following of scripture, which Arnold sees as the cause of their legalism and "Pharisaism," and their divisiveness.<sup>92</sup> He sees this manifested in pride, willfulness, and legalism.<sup>93</sup> However, while there may be some truth to this suggestion, a more obvious reason for the criticism given by Mack may stem from the ongoing issue of baptism. Mack emphatically disagreed with the Mennonites' mode of baptism. If one's faith practice is to remain consistent with scripture, it must be carried out likewise especially regarding the ordinances.

It has been argued by others that Radical Pietism had a far greater impact upon Anabaptism than *vice versa*.<sup>94</sup> Likewise Anabaptism affected the Early Brethren (who came directly out of Radical Pietism) to a lesser degree than has been argued by other scholars. This conclusion would coincide with Ensign's argument that the majority of Early Brethren beliefs were derived from Radical Pietism rather than Anabaptism.<sup>95</sup> Ensign argues that while Willoughby demonstrates the Anabaptist influence upon the Early Brethren, the Radical Pietists held to most of the same beliefs.<sup>96</sup> This observation would suggest that rather than the Early Brethren being primarily influenced by the Anabaptists when they formalized their fellowship, that it would have been almost natural for them to look toward Anabaptism to supplement their Radical Pietist beliefs as they sought to form a *Gemeinde*. While Willoughby suggests ten Anabaptist beliefs that were incorporated into the Early Brethren consciousness, it should be noted that seven of the suggested beliefs were shared by the Radical Pietists and thus already held by the Early Brethren. The three that distinguish Anabaptism from Radical Pietism were: "1) they were joining the True Church established by Jesus; 2) they deliberately organized their *Gemeinde* after the pattern and spirit of the New Testament, Apostolic church; 3) the ban should be used against all who, having been baptized, yet stumble into sin."<sup>97</sup> While there is no doubt that Anabaptism affected the Early Brethren in life and practice, the Early Brethren were not

indisputably Anabaptist as were the Mennonites. Their Radical Pietist convictions remained. This is especially illustrated with Alexander Mack's criticism of the Mennonites. Thus it can only be stated substantially that Anabaptism affected or contributed to the Early Brethren in terms of organization and discipline. The core convictions, therefore, which Anabaptism affected upon Early Brethrenism concern the formation of the *Gemeinde* and the discipline which it would follow.

### The Dialectic Tension

In 1961 Vernard Eller published an article with the purpose of epitomizing the Church of the Brethren identity. His articulation of the Brethren identity describes a dialectic tension which he saw existing between Radical Pietism and Anabaptism.<sup>98</sup> Unlike a Hegelian dialectic which results in synthesis, Eller argues that it is a relational dialectic that serves as a checks and balance. Eller describes it as follows:

When the Radical Pietist tendency would slide off into subjectivism, private inspiration, mysticism, enthusiasm, or vaporous spiritualism, it is pulled up short by the demand for concrete, outward obedience to an objective Scriptural norm. Conversely, when the Anabaptist tendency would slide off into formalism, legalism, biblical literalism, or works-righteousness, it is checked by the reminder that faith is essentially a work of God within the heart of the individual believer, an intensely personal relationship rather than a legal one. Thus within Brethrenism, Anabaptist influences *discipline* Pietism at the same time that Pietist influences *inspire* Anabaptism.<sup>99</sup>

This idea of dialectic tension counters the earlier arguments by both Ensign and Willoughby who provide convincing arguments as to the Brethren identity being an either/or choice (either Radical Pietist or Anabaptist). As the Early Brethren began to navigate the waters of their new *Gemeinde*, it is plausible that Eller's dialectic tension existed as this new community began attempting to reconcile both sets of beliefs in their daily practice. After all, life practice was the validation of faith.

However, Eller's dialectic tension theory is based upon the premise that there exists distinctive, perhaps even contradictory, differences between Radical Pietism and Anabaptism. Eller defines this difference as being an *inner* and *outer* distinction. He argues that the Radical Pietists emphasized an inner spirituality while the Anabaptists emphasized an outer obedience. However, at least two questions arise from Eller's concept. First, is "dialectic tension" an adequate

description of the Brethren's unique and complex identity? And second, do distinctive differences exist between Radical Pietism and Anabaptism to the extent Eller suggests? In other words, does Anabaptism emphasize an outward obedience and not an inward devotion? And does Radical Pietism really emphasize an inward devotion and not an outward obedience?

In Eller's argument, regarding the "dialectic tension," there is a sense of contradiction and a pulling back and forth that exists in the tension as he states that the Brethren identity is not static. Even as Eller attempts to alleviate this sense using concepts of checks and balances one must question if Radical Pietism and Anabaptism are contradictory in some sense. While his illustration and explanation make sense in a general way, some of the specifics, such as the issues of the categorizing of Anabaptism as outward and Radical Pietism as inward, begin to break down under closer scrutiny. First, it is difficult to categorize the Anabaptists generally due in most part to the diversity that exists within the tradition. In a recent work, C. Arnold Snyder presents a history of Anabaptism that portrays the Anabaptists as struggling with an *inner/outer* tension similar to that of the Brethren.<sup>100</sup> In this argument he describes two primary schools of thought: the spiritualist or those emphasizing the inner, and the literalists or those emphasizing the outer.<sup>101</sup> This argument alone illustrates the inability to classify Anabaptism as simply emphasizing outer obedience. Second, contrary to Eller, Radical Pietism certainly calls for outward expressions of faith as is illustrated in their conviction that faith is expressed in moral behavior. Surely Radical Pietists also emphasized good works and charity in their expression of faith.

This then raises the second question posed previously, "do contradicting differences exist between Anabaptism and Radical Pietism?" According to Carl F. Bowman, the currents of Anabaptism and Radical Pietism are "mutually reinforcing."<sup>102</sup> He says, "Viewing Pietism and Anabaptism as *mutually reinforcing currents* . . . illuminates the fact that heightened (or lessened) spirituality may produce heightened (or lessened) obedience and church commitment."<sup>103</sup> Yet even in Bowman's description, the concern is between Anabaptism and Radical Pietism. Perhaps the answer to this sense of tension with the inner and outer is not found between Anabaptism and Radical Pietism, but is simply an aspect of Christian faith. Even the Anabaptists experienced a tension between the inner (spiritual) and the outer (obedience). Maybe what the Brethren have been experiencing is the same inward and outward dynamic that Christians have been experiencing for centuries. This is not to lessen the contributions Radical Pietism and Anabaptism have brought to the Brethren identity, but it is to suggest that the tension Eller intuitively discerned does not exist between Anabaptism and Radical Pietism, at least not how

he means it. I would argue instead that the identity of the Brethren is a complex interrelationship of their unique narratives and convictions which derive from both Anabaptism and Radical Pietism. It must be understood that their identity is not duplicitous, but a unified interrelationship of their community's shared memories and the convictions they have discerned from scripture. Furthermore I would argue that the tension which Eller discerns exists in the inward and outward aspects of authentic faith, and that the tension which certainly does exist between Radical Pietism and Anabaptism is found in the form of individualism and community.

As has already been discussed, Radical Pietists believed celibacy (involving marriage to Sophia) as being most desirable and they were extreme separatists having no formal organization but living in loose affiliation with one another. In addition, Radical Pietists believed themselves accountable to no human or human institution. In fact, they resisted forming any formal fellowship as to avoid following in the errors of the established church. These illustrate the individualistic tendencies of Radical Pietism. On other hand the Anabaptists emphasized community holding to a strong ecclesiology that incorporated the ban as a means of accountability. They lived in interdependent communities relying upon each other for the expression of Christ's love. Bender describes them in terms of brotherhood, love, and nonresistance, all terms characteristic of community.<sup>104</sup> While even the Radical Pietists held to some of these as well, the most distinctive difference was the sense of brotherhood and accountability.

While the tension of the inner and outer certainly exists in Brethrenism, it concerns faith and is not a question of Anabaptism or Radical Pietism. The reality is, both Anabaptism and Radical Pietism experience this same inner and outer tension. However, a tension does exist between Anabaptism and Radical Pietism. One that strikes at the foundation of the Brethren struggle: the issue of individualism (autonomy) and community (accountability).

### **The Early Brethren Bible Reading Method**

For both Anabaptists and Radical Pietists scripture is the foundation of their faith. Yet unlike the Anabaptists, the Radical Pietists "reasoned that since all 'sects' appeal to Scripture and yet are 'godless' one cannot prove one's faith from Scripture."<sup>105</sup> Alexander Mack directly answers this question, citing 2 Timothy 3:15-17 to emphasize the importance of scripture as authoritative for faith and practice.<sup>106</sup> Thus, from their formation, even as scripture has served as the basis of their faith Brethren have read scripture simplistically. As Durnbaugh has said, "One way to describe their approach is to say that they were biblicists, taking the Bible at face value."<sup>107</sup> To better understand the context of the Early Brethren approach one



must remember their Pietist beginnings. One of the primary convictions of Pietism was that any "awakened Christian" could and should study the Bible.<sup>108</sup> In the spirit of reform, Pietism sought to liberate Christians from the "Orthodox mechanical material view of Scripture."<sup>109</sup> Thus Pietism freed the Bible from the rationalistic and formalistic approaches of the state churches. Stoffer adds that for Pietism a central component of their approach was the "conviction that Scripture does not become effective mechanically but must be brought to life in the soul by the Holy Spirit."<sup>110</sup> This recognition implies that the hermeneut is not the sole interpreter, nor is the scripture the sole source of meaning. The Pietists (as do the Anabaptists) take seriously the role of the Spirit in the interpretation process to such an extent as to trust that the Spirit will lead an untrained layperson to an understanding of scripture.

The stalwart of Pietism, Spener, set out to liberate laypeople and encourage an enthusiastic study of the scriptures. Even while he was encouraging the open study of scripture in conventicles, he was sure to always stipulate the presence of the pastor.<sup>111</sup> Regardless of this effort for some sort of controlling factor, "a discussion format" was used that allowed equal opportunity to share insight and knowledge.<sup>112</sup> It was Spener's intent to free the scriptures from the dogmatism and creedalism that infected the church. Stoffer elaborates this point, "If Scripture was to be the supreme authority, one must not limit its voice by finding in the Bible only what was sanctioned by the creeds."<sup>113</sup> This serves as the basis for an openness in the interpretative process for the Early Brethren as well as the importance of Bible study in community and not merely as individuals, which is the Anabaptist ideal for a hermeneutical community.

In addition to this emphasis upon Bible study, the Anabaptists emphasized the necessity to obey the scripture. In Wenger's article, he describes the Anabaptists as holding strictly to the Reformed principle of *sola scriptura* unlike the Reformers who were not consistent with this.<sup>114</sup> This existential approach to scripture meant that not only were believers to read scripture but also obey it. Discipleship is always a core concern for an Anabaptist approach to scripture. While Anabaptists share some of the same convictions with the Pietists concerning scripture, for them application is the heart of biblical interpretation and accountability to the interpretation was the communal responsibility. In the same way application was central for Early Brethren interpretation.

### *The Brethren and Scripture*

From the very beginnings of the Brethren movement, this group of people were considered by others and themselves as "people of the Word." The

significance of the Bible is found in the complex authoritative role it plays for the Early Brethren *Gemeinde*. While they continued to hold to the inner leading of the Spirit of Christ, as Hochmann taught them, when they formed the *Gemeinde* a shift occurred in their convictions as well. Obedience became the ultimate expression of faith.<sup>115</sup> Yet even while there is significant evidence of their elevated emphasis on scripture (the outer Word) as the supreme authority, it is equally true that they recognized and emphasized the authority of the inner Word. In his article, "The Early Brethren Concept of Authority," Martin Schrag observed that Alexander Mack affirmed "both the inner witness and its authority and the outer witness and its authority."<sup>116</sup> He further clarifies this idea as such:

Just because the Scripture is inspired and is the outward form of the message given innerly to the apostles should not lead one to believe that one can come to the outer as the starting point. Scripture cannot be understood until the "inner ears" have been opened. It is possible to read Scripture, talk about Scripture, but "if the spirit of faith is not in him," he will not understand the message.<sup>117</sup>

Therefore, authority did not lie solely upon the outer word, but the convicting Spirit of Christ (the inner Word) was recognized as an equally essential authority.<sup>118</sup> In his article, "Brethren and the Bible," Richard B. Gardner describes the Early Brethren idea of "authority" using four basic statements:

1. Scripture itself is viewed as a product of divine inspiration.
2. The Spirit creates faith in and understanding of the message of Scripture.
3. The Spirit continues to reveal and instruct, writing God's word inwardly in the hearts of the faithful.
4. The inward word of the Spirit agrees fully with the outward word of Scripture.<sup>119</sup>

For the Early Brethren, authority ultimately rests in God as revealed in Jesus Christ.<sup>120</sup> This christocentric emphasis of authority extends to their christocentric approach to scripture.

### *Christocentric Interpretative Approach*

While the Early Brethren recognized all scripture to be inspired and authoritative, their approach to scripture was christocentric. In "Basic Questions," Alexander Mack articulates the christocentric approach in terms of "fulfillment in the context of continuity."<sup>121</sup> Answering questions 6, 10, and 11, Mack says that

Jesus Christ is the fulfilment of the Old Testament and in being such has "annulled the first law because it was too weak and could not make anyone perfect."<sup>122</sup> Mack then says that Christ "secured redemption, revealed the paths to the Holy of Holies, and gave only laws of life."<sup>123</sup> "For this reason," he says, "the teachings of Jesus are rightly to be observed by believers in these days."<sup>124</sup> Thus, for the Early Brethren the life and teachings of Jesus Christ were of supreme importance, being valued above the rest of the New Testament as well as the Old Testament. They also held the New Testament above the Old Testament in that it fulfils the Old Testament. This elevation of the New Testament over the Old reflects the similarity Anabaptists shared with the Early Brethren as to valuing the New Testament over the Old. However, the Anabaptist view of scripture was somewhat different.<sup>125</sup> It is generally agreed that the Early Brethren believed they were called to obedience and discipleship to the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. As Schrag rightly notes the christocentric nature of the new *Gemeinde*, "The literal observation of the example and commandments of the Lord Jesus was the new emphasis."<sup>126</sup>

While the Early Brethren certainly held a christocentric approach to scripture, their interpretation of scripture bears more distinctions. Richard B. Gardner writes concerning the Brethren as he describes their approach to biblical interpretation, he says that "at least five distinguishing marks characterize the way Brethren interpret the Bible."<sup>127</sup>

1. Brethren have insisted on reading the Bible with an attitude of openness to new truth.
2. Brethren have approached the Bible with a desire to recover and emulate primitive Christianity.
3. Brethren have interpreted the Old Testament in light of the New Testament in terms of the commands and examples of Jesus Christ.
4. Brethren have emphasized an intrinsic connection between knowing the truth and doing the truth.
5. Brethren have stressed the importance of the community of believers studying the Bible together.<sup>128</sup>

One conviction is not expressed in the above list: no force in religion (which is a significant factor even to the present). The idea of "no force in religion" is based in the experience of the Early Brethren who refused to affirm the doctrines of the institutional church and were consequently persecuted. Both Anabaptists and Radical Pietists experienced persecution because of their supposed "unorthodoxy." Therefore it was a central conviction for this community that one cannot force another to believe as they do, because the work of persuasion was the work of the

Holy Spirit.<sup>129</sup>

*Openness to New Understandings*

From the forming of their *Gemeinde* there was always an attitude of seeking an informed reading of scripture. While Durnbaugh rightly states that the Brethren took the Bible at face value, he also notes their openness to receive assistance by those who understood the biblical languages.<sup>130</sup> He describes their Bible reading method as being a "straightforward, commonsense manner."<sup>131</sup> Their desire for an informed reading points back to their very beginnings when Alexander Mack studied "trustworthy histories" that would offer more guidance in forming the new *Gemeinde*.<sup>132</sup> In addition to this example, the Early Brethren further demonstrated an interest for an informed reading when they adjusted their communion service by placing footwashing before love feast in the service. Durnbaugh describes this event:

He (Alexander Mack Jr.) first described how they had washed feet after the meal and the breaking of the bread, and then how, after they "saw a little nearer," they washed feet before the breaking of bread. "Then when Reitz published the New Testament, and a brother came among us, who understood Greek, and pointed out to us properly, how Jesus washed feet before supper."<sup>133</sup>

This desire for an informed reading by further study was by no means required by all believers. It can generally be stated that the Early Brethren were uneducated. However, to compensate for this they believed that the "Holy Spirit would assist the faithful."<sup>134</sup>

In addition to the outer Word and the inner Word, there is also a third factor to be considered, i.e., the community. While the Early Brethren read the outer Word, they relied upon the inner Word for spiritual illumination. However, Bible study was not an individual prospect. The *Gemeinde* played a central role in the comprehension of scripture. Much like the Pietists and Anabaptists, the Early Brethren studied the Bible as a community. Yet unlike the Radical Pietists they did not accept any free interpretation and scripture was the basis of faith.<sup>135</sup> If the validating factor for interpretation was not based upon methodology, then what was the controlling factor for biblical interpretation in the Early Brethren community? In essence it was a combination of three components: the written word (outer Word), the Holy Spirit (inner Word), and the community. The community shaped the interpretation process by the convictions that it held. These convictions, which arose from Bible study and life experience, also served to shape the way that the



Early Brethren read and understood scripture. For instance, their conviction of possessing an attitude of "openness" when studying the Bible liberated the scriptures from formalistic methods.<sup>136</sup> This conviction affected an openness in the interpretation process. In addition to this it must be emphasized that the Early Brethren practiced Bible study in community. Durnbaugh expresses both the significance of community and of openness, saying, "One reason that they rejected creeds was that they had a lively expectation that God had more light yet to break through the pages of scripture as they studied it together."<sup>137</sup>

### *A Threefold Interrelationship*

Therefore the Early Brethren Bible reading method could be summarized as a threefold interrelationship<sup>138</sup> between the written (outer) Word, the Holy Spirit (inner Word), and the community. While the new *Gemeinde* read the scripture in a straightforward, commonsense manner, the Holy Spirit (inner Word) convicts the *Gemeinde* to respond pragmatically. Yet the interpretation of the scripture is consequently controlled by the convictions of the community, which originally arose from prayer and study in the context of their historical background (shared experiences). In this sense the Spirit-led community shapes the interpretation of the scripture. It must be understood that for the Early Brethren, only the person and thus the community who is illumined by the Spirit can understand and believe the scriptures.<sup>139</sup> Therefore, the Early Brethren, having shared particular experiences including specific convictions by the Holy Spirit through scripture, have a distinctive approach to scripture. In other words, the Early Brethren being a Spirit-led community, approached scripture from a particular and distinctive perspective, thus affecting particular scriptural interpretations.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose for this paper has been to define the hermeneutical perspective of the Early Brethren; to define and describe both Radical Pietism and Anabaptism, which essentially contribute to the Brethren identity and thus their perspective; and finally to describe how the Early Brethren interpreted scripture. In the process of these descriptions I have argued against any simplistic definition of the Early Brethren, specifically as being either Anabaptist or Radical Pietist. While the Early Brethren certainly possess characteristics of both and share similar convictions with both Anabaptism and Radical Pietism, neither term adequately defines them. It has been demonstrated that the first eight brothers and sisters left the established churches (6 from the Reformed church and 2 from the Lutheran) and joined the loosely affiliated Radical Pietists led by Ernst Christoph Hochmann von

Hochenau. Essentially the Early Brethren were a group of Radical Pietists who became disenchanted with the state church and who had broken completely away from it. Then following substantial prayer and scriptural study, they decided to form a *Gemeinde* of brothers and sisters sharing in adult baptism by immersion. This brief summary of their development illustrates both the Radical Pietist and Anabaptist influence upon the Early Brethren. However following these descriptions, the question arises as to the extent to which both contributed to the Early Brethren identity and the interaction that occurs between them in the process.

Therefore, special attention was given to Vernard Eller's argument that the Brethren identity is a dialectic tension between Pietism and Anabaptism. This dialectic tension, he argued, is not a Hegelian one, but rather a relational tension. His argument was based upon the assumptions that a tension exists between Anabaptism and Radical Pietism. The tension takes form in that Anabaptism emphasizes outer obedience over inner spirituality and Radical Pietism vice versa. Their interaction occurs as they mutually reinforce one another through a series of checks and balances. However, by demonstrating the inability of the dialectic tension to describe the complexity of Early Brethren identity and by challenging the nature of Eller's dialectic tension, I have argued that the tension existing between Radical Pietism and Anabaptism is not inner/outer but is individualism/community.

Finally, I argued that the Early Brethren approached scripture in a "straightforward manner;" that they read the scriptures applying common sense. I also argued that while they possessed a somewhat unique understanding of scriptural authority, they also held an openness to being enlightened to new truths as they were led by the Holy Spirit. Noting the similarities between Archer's "tridactic interrelationship" model of scriptural interpretation with that of the Early Brethren, I argued that their reading method was best described as a threefold interrelationship between the written word, the Holy Spirit, and the community.

In the process defining the hermeneutical perspective of the CoB, this thesis has thus far sketched the historical narrative of the CoB and has answered the questions regarding the Early Brethren hermeneutical perspective, the nature of the their identity, and how they interpreted scripture.

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<sup>1</sup>Alexander Mack, "The First Brethren Tract," *The Complete Writings of Alexander Mack*. (Winona Lake: BMH Books, 1991), 9.

<sup>2</sup>William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., *Introduction*

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to *Biblical Interpretation*. (Dallas: Word Publishers, 1991), 4.

<sup>3</sup>H. W. Fowler, F. G. Fowler, and Della Thompson, editors, *Oxford Concise English Dictionary*. Ninth edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 1055.

<sup>4</sup>In his thesis, "Forging a New Path: A Contemporary Pentecostal Hermeneutical Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." (St. Andrews: University of St. Andrews Dissertation, 2001), Kenneth J. Archer argues that there are "central narrative convictions" within a community which explain "why the community exists," who the community is, and "how they fit into the larger scheme of Christian history." Archer's argument is an expansion of Douglas Jacobson's work "Pentecostal Hermeneutics in Comparative Hermeneutical Perspective." Jacobson's work lays the foundation for acknowledging the significance of hermeneutical communities and that each of these communities possess a distinctive identity which shapes the particular perspective by which they read scripture. It has been only recently that Pentecostalism has begun discussing or at least acknowledging the community as a hermeneutical lens through which perception (particularly the scriptures) is negotiated. In much the same manner I will argue that the core convictions of the Early Brethren are the hermeneutical lens through which they read scripture. In addition these convictions are in essence central narrative convictions in that they emerge out of the narratives of Early Brethren faith experience.

<sup>5</sup>This concept of "creating meaning" requires further explanation. While not accepting the extreme conclusion of Stephen Fowl's argument in *Engaging Scripture* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1998), which argues that a text has no meaning or that it is "underdetermined," this writer uses this with the understanding that a text is a pool of potential meaning. Admittedly, the term "meaning" offers ambiguity in formal discussions. However, Kenneth J. Archer argues in his thesis, "Forging a New Path: A Contemporary Pentecostal Hermeneutical Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," that meaning is a byproduct of a "tridactic" interrelationship which occurs as a person in community being led by the Spirit engages the text of scripture.

<sup>6</sup>Perhaps it is best to acknowledge that no one exists apart from community. Regardless of circumstances, individuals experience some sort of cultural community, thus making them parts of community and hermeneuts whose perception is shaped by the community.

<sup>7</sup>While this study focuses upon the two primary sources of identity, from which the Brethren come, namely, Anabaptism and Pietism, it is necessary to also recognize that some scholars include the Reformed tradition in their formula. This is based upon the fact that six of the first eight Brethren left the Reformed church with the Radical Pietist movement. Thus both Dale Stoffer and Donald Durnbaugh include the Reformed tradition as playing a central

role in the forming of the Brethren identity. It is not the intention of this study to ignore the Reformed influence. This study presupposes that the Early Brethren predominantly moved out of the Reformed tradition into Pietism, then into Radical Pietism, and finally formed a new *Gemeinde*. The minimal noting of Reformed influence is due to the radical protestation of the Reformed tradition. However it is also presupposed that the Brethren share many basic theological understandings due simply to the origin of the Early Brethren.

<sup>8</sup>The form of Pietism primarily relevant to this study is German Pietism. It is necessary to clarify this point due to the multifaceted nature of Pietism. Admittedly, Pietism was not limited to the European Continent, but also arose in Great Britain and North America.

<sup>9</sup>William G. Willoughby, *The Beliefs of the Early Brethren 1706-1735*. (Philadelphia: Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc., 1999), 27.

<sup>10</sup>F. Ernest Stoeffler, *German Pietism During the Eighteenth Century*. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973), 18. Stoeffler also points out five themes that Francke continually emphasized and which Pietists also continued: trials, cross-bearing, obedience to God's law, trust in God, and joy (19). Each of these continually resurface in Francke's sermons.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>12</sup>See Chauncey David Ensign, *Radical German Pietism (c. 1675 - c. 1760)*. (Boston University Dissertation, 1955), 84.

<sup>13</sup>Andrew Landale Drummond, *German Protestantism Since Luther*. (London: Epworth Press, 1951), 56. What Drummond means by "spiritual intelligence" is the intellectual understanding of what one professes through prayer and devotion. In his text, Drummond expresses this through a comparison between what he calls the spiritually intelligent and those who are spiritually ignorant by saying "even in the Reformed Palatinate the ignorant prayed 'deliver us from the Kingdom' and in the Creed declared that Christ was 'piousified under Pilate.'"

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup>Dale Brown, *Understanding Pietism*. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1978), 151.

<sup>16</sup>Willoughby, *The Beliefs of the Early Brethren 1706-1735*, 30.



<sup>17</sup>Mack, "The First Brethren Tract," *The Complete Writings of Alexander Mack*, 9-14. In his first tract, Mack explains the origins of the Early Brethren convictions.

<sup>18</sup>Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1850-1987*, 15.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.* See also Stoeffler, *German Pietism During the Eighteenth Century*, 17-18.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>27</sup>Ensign, *Radical German Pietism (c. 1675 - c. 1760)*. 407.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 174-176.

<sup>32</sup>Ensign labels this doctrinal belief, "Sophia-mysticism and natural secrets" (409). This is based upon Boehme's claim that Sophia revealed divine secrets about nature to him.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>34</sup>Hans L. Martensen and Stephen Hobhouse, *Jacob Boehme (1575-1624), Studies in his Life and Teachings*. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), 24. As cited in Ensign, *Radical German Pietism*, 36.

<sup>35</sup>Ensign, *Radical German Pietism*, 409.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 230-231.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 410.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>This stage is described in such a way as to sound monistic in essence. However, the understanding of this union with God is more attuned to the same sense found among Pietists who, as Stoffer describes, as a believer "is united with Christ in a psychological and volitional union." Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1850-1987*, 17.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 411.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 412.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 413.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>This is of particular significance because the majority of Early Brethren left the Reformed tradition as briefly mentioned in chapter one.

<sup>49</sup>Ensign, *Radical German Pietism*, 413-414.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 414.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 415.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 416.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Willoughby, *The Beliefs of the Early Brethren 1706-1735*. 35.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 38.

<sup>61</sup>Heinz Renkewitz, *Hochmann von Hochenau: 1670-1721*. (Philadelphia: Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc., 1993), 32.

<sup>62</sup>Renkewitz, *Hochmann von Hochenau (1670 - 1721)*, 34-35. "1) The basic principle is the expectation of the imminent return of Christ . . . 2) The new priesthood means a conquest of the former traditional priesthood . . . 3) The new priests are bound together in one order . . . 4) The loosing of all natural ties is the precondition for those who are ordained into the new priesthood . . . 5) The task of the new priests consists of sanctification for self and of sacrificial prayer for others . . . 6) Hochmann recognizes his special task to be that of warning of highly placed persons, kings, princes, and counts of the coming judgment, and leading them to a personal conversion before it is too late." Number two of the distinguishing characteristics uses the term "priesthood." It refers to the universal priesthood of all believers and it is used in the specific sense of Ernst Hochmann and Samuel König as instituting a priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. Willoughby notes that it is similar to the order instituted by the Philadelphian Society of England (101).

<sup>63</sup>See Willoughby, *The Beliefs of the Early Brethren 1706-1735*. 39.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid. It is necessary to note that while Radical Pietists worshipped together and even lived in communal settings, the individualism that existed among them in contrast to the Anabaptists was the lack of accountability. Radical Pietists believed themselves accountable to no human institution nor assembly, they found their accountability only in the

leading of the inner light. Radical Pietists were loosely affiliated with one another and often developed different beliefs. Alexander Mack expresses his criticism of this lack of accountability by answering Gruber's question regarding whether Brethren possessed more love before their baptism. He answers saying that they did not possess more love "unless this meant the simulated love which is feigned for the sake of bread or honor, and which does not punish sins or errors. This kind of love says: 'Leave me alone in my own will, opinion, and actions, and I will leave you alone in yours; we will love each other and be brethren.' . . . Unfortunately, we stayed long enough in this pernicious hypocritical love, while we were still among the Pietists." "Basic Questions," 38.

<sup>65</sup>Donald Durnbaugh, *Brethren Beginnings: the Origin of the Church of the Brethren in Eighteenth Century Europe*. (Philadelphia: Brethren Encyclopedia, 1992), 64.

<sup>66</sup>Ensign, *Radical German Pietism (c. 1675 - c. 1760)*. 276-291.

<sup>67</sup>Vernard Eller, "On Epitomizing the Brethren." *Brethren Life and Thought*, VI, no. 4 (1961): 48. In this article, Eller, provides a convincing argument that suggests that an Aeither-or" approach to the question of Anabaptism or Pietism is incorrect. Very pointedly he says, "At heart, Brethrenism is a dialectic relationship, not a static principle" (48). He further clarifies this claim as to avoid any Hegelian sense of synthesis. He says that the tension that exists between the two points is the "actual creative point of focus" (48).

<sup>68</sup>Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1850-1987*. 42.

<sup>69</sup>Willoughby, *The Beliefs of the Early Brethren 1706-1735*. 68.

<sup>70</sup>Ensign, *Radical German Pietism (c. 1675 - c. 1760)*. 411. Under his summary of "Bible and inspiration," he implies this openness when he says, "they no more thought that the day of revelation was over than that the age of grace was past." To support that this conviction of "openness," which was held by the Radical Pietists, had an impact upon the Early Brethren is expressed when Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine*, 49, describes the Early Brethren biblicism as follows: "One reason that they rejected creeds was that they had a lively expectation that God had more light yet to break through the pages of scripture as they studied together."

<sup>71</sup>For the Early Brethren, scripture is the test of the inner witness. Martin Schrag explains that "scripture is the basis for judging the validity of a person's Christianity" ("Early Brethren Concept of Authority," *BLT*. IX: Fall: 1964: 116). And the Early Brethren readily used scripture in this way when interacting with those outside their community.



<sup>72</sup>This final doctrinal conviction is the view that God will certainly punish unbelieving sinners for their sin, but ultimately His love would overcome restoring them and bringing them into the "final state of blessedness." Alexander Mack is cautious in his teaching of this doctrine, stating, "Therefore, that is a much better and more blessed gospel which teaches how to escape the wrath of God than the gospel which teaches that eternal punishment has an end." "Rights and Ordinances," 98.

<sup>73</sup>Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1850-1987*. 57.

<sup>74</sup>See Durnbaugh, *The Believer's Church*. (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1968); Durnbaugh, *Brethren Beginnings: the Origin of the Church of the Brethren in Eighteenth Century Europe*; Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine*; Ensign, "Radical German Pietism (c. 1675 - c. 1760)"; Ernst Crous, "Anabaptism, Pietism, Rationalism and German Mennonites," *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*. (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1957), 237-248; F. Ernst Stoeffler *German Pietism During the Eighteenth Century*. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973), includes the Early Brethren among the Anabaptists while acknowledging their relationship to Hochmann von Hochenau, thus again accentuating the sometimes confusing similarities between the two groups; Willoughby, *The Beliefs of the Early Brethren 1706-1735*.

<sup>75</sup>Ernst Crous, "Anabaptism, Pietism, Rationalism and German Mennonites," *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*. (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1957), 240-241. In this article, Crous cites and expands Friedmann, who observes two primary similarities between Pietism and Anabaptism. Friedmann says that Pietists and Anabaptists share two fundamental rejections, 1) the state church, and 2) confessional dogmatism. Crous goes on to delineate the differences between the two as being primarily that of "emphasis." He says, "Anabaptism stresses the fear of God (*Gottesfurcht*), Christian discipleship, following Christ (*Nachfolge Christi*) in love and the cross, and the fellowship of the unity of the Spirit (*Gemeinschaft der Geistesinheit*). Pietism, on the other hand, stresses *Gottseligkeit*, a blissful devotional experience which enjoys the assurance of individual salvation; *praxis pietatis* in daily life, blissful form of devotion, together with a mild friendliness and morality, as well as the fellowship of the regenerated" (241). As can be seen, fundamental differences between the two are predominantly expressed in the tone of the description.

<sup>76</sup>Donald K.. McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 9. In this work McKim defines Anabaptism as, "those who advocated rebaptism in certain instances. Most prominently, the 16<sup>th</sup> century reformers who renounced infant baptism, stressed the literal reading of scripture, and supported separation of church and state." As can be observed this definition fails to express the significant contributions of Anabaptism to Christianity. Many definitions seem to home in on two or three characteristics, while failing to acknowledge the most significant tenets of their doctrinal beliefs, i.e. nonresistance, brotherly love, praxis-oriented faith, radical

discipleship, etc. Perhaps the most ironic result of their nonresistance is that they have been universally labeled "Anabaptists," a term used by the established church to scornfully describe them.

<sup>77</sup>Willoughby, *The Beliefs of the Early Brethren 1706-1735*, 42. Interestingly enough, C. Arnold Snyder uses remarkably similar language describing the Anabaptist movement. He says, "Anabaptism was a reform movement born at the time and in the context of the Protestant Reformation, an unwanted and unloved 'stepchild' of the mainline reformers . . ." *Anabaptist History and Theology: An Introduction*. (Kitchener: Pandora Press, 1995), 1.

<sup>78</sup>*Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>79</sup>Willoughby (51) cites Franklin Littell's definition from *The Anabaptist View of the Church: a Study in the Origins of Sectarian Protestantism*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (Boston: Starr King Press, 1958), xviii. This understanding can be expanded further as the early Anabaptists believed themselves to be the true church and had completely and enthusiastically committed themselves to the body of Christ on earth. Snyder (*Anabaptist History and Theology: An Introduction*, 1ff.) points out the negative connotations that the term Anabaptism carried with it. This group of committed believers were thus labeled with a term used to categorize one of the two heresies warranting death. It is interesting that while term literally means "re-baptizer," the Anabaptists considered themselves merely Baptists because they were convinced that infant baptism was not baptism.

<sup>80</sup>Snyder, *Anabaptist History and Theology: An Introduction*, 83.

<sup>81</sup>*Ibid.*, 95.

<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*, 90. Snyder notes that the majority of doctrinal emphasis lies within their ecclesiology.

<sup>83</sup>Willoughby, *The Beliefs of the Early Brethren 1706-1735*, 46.

<sup>84</sup>Willoughby cites Alexander Mack Jr. from Henry Kurtz' *The Brethren's Encyclopedia, Containing the United Counsels and Conclusions of the Brethren, at their Annual Meetings*. (Columbiana: Henry Kurtz, 1867).

<sup>85</sup>Alexander Mack, "Basic Questions," *The Complete Writings of Alexander Mack*. (Winona Lake: BMH Books, 1991), 37.

<sup>86</sup>Harold S. Bender, "Anabaptist Vision," *Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*. (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1957), 42.

<sup>87</sup>See Willoughby, *The Beliefs of the Early Brethren 1706-1735*, 56.

<sup>88</sup>Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1850-1987*, 56.

<sup>89</sup>Alexander Mack, "Basic Questions," *The Complete Writings of Alexander Mack*, 37.

<sup>90</sup>In Mack's tract, "Basic Questions," he responds to questions of doctrine posed by Eberhard Gruber (A leader of the Inspirationists movement in Germany) concerning the Early Brethren *Gemeinde*. As to this particular quotation, Mack was responding to Gruber's question (question #33), "Do you regard your church as superior to those of all other Baptist-Minded (*Taufgesinnte*) of these or previous times, and if so, in which way and why?" Mack's answer to this is, "It is true that we consider our church fellowship superior to these now-deteriorated Baptists (Mennonites), with whom we are acquainted, and whom we know. The reason is that they have deteriorated in doctrine and life, and have strayed far from the doctrine and life of the old Baptists (Anabaptists). Many of them notice this and realize it themselves. We cannot answer concerning the previous Baptists, because we did not know them in life. We are completely agreed with them as far as their doctrine is concerned, which does not teach anything in contradiction to the gospel." Alexander Mack, "Basic Questions," *The Complete Writings of Alexander Mack*, 37.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid.

<sup>92</sup>Interestingly enough this same judgment has been made against the Pietists as was earlier stated.

<sup>93</sup>Stoffer cites Gottfried Arnold [*Unparteyische Kirchen- und Ketzer-historie*. Vol. 1 (Schaffhausen: Emanuel and Benedict Hurter, 1740). 1:2, 16, 21, 7:859; 1:2, 16, 21, 39:874; 2:2, 17, 12, 31:167], *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1850-1987*, 57. It is important to note that C. Arnold Snyder convincingly disputes this claim asserting that there were a diversity of biblical approaches among the distinctive Anabaptist communities, thus disallowing any overarching statements regarding an Anabaptist hermeneutic (Snyder, *Anabaptist History and Theology: An Introduction*, 161). Moreover, Snyder begins his argument regarding this issue stating that there was both a diversity in methodology and a consensus regarding the interpretative tradition which directly affects the "hermeneutical perspective" (159, 365-376). While Snyder's criticism may be inherently correct, the fact of the matter was that the Brethren acknowledged and affirmed this criticism thus establishing themselves as a distinctive identity wholly separate from the Anabaptist

community.

<sup>94</sup>Robert Friedmann, *Mennonite Piety through the Centuries: Its Genius and its Literature*. (Goshen: The Mennonite Historical Society, 1949), 217.

<sup>95</sup>Ensign, *Radical German Pietism (c. 1675 - c. 1760)*. 278.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid.

<sup>97</sup>Willoughby, *The Beliefs of the Early Brethren 1706-1735*, 56.

<sup>98</sup>Eller, "On Epitomizing the Brethren," 48.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., 49-50.

<sup>100</sup>C. Arnold Snyder, *Anabaptist History and Theology: An Introduction*. (Kitchener: Pandora Press, 1995), 299ff.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid., 300.

<sup>102</sup>Carl F. Bowman, *Brethren Society*. (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1995), 46.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid.

<sup>104</sup>Bender, "Anabaptist Vision," *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*, 42.

<sup>105</sup>Schrag, "The Early Brethren Concept of Authority," 121.

<sup>106</sup>Mack, "Rights and Ordinances," 81-82.

<sup>107</sup>Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine*, 49.

<sup>108</sup>Cited in Willoughby, *The Beliefs of the Early Brethren 1706-1735*, 30. In this passage, Willoughby cites Phillip Schaff as saying that Pietism by "granting the 'awakened' Christian full capacity for independent study of the Bible, Pietism restored to laymen the right which they had lost." Phillip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882), IX, 62.



<sup>109</sup>As has been characterized by Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1850-1987*, 17.

<sup>110</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup>Richard L. Gawthrop, *Pietism and the Making of Eighteenth-Century Prussia*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 108-109.

<sup>112</sup>*Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>113</sup>Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1850-1987*, 17.

<sup>114</sup>John C. Wenger, "Biblicism of the Anabaptists," *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*. (Paris: The Baptist Standard Bearer, 1957), 170-171.

<sup>115</sup>In his journal article, "The Early Brethren Concept of Authority" (114), Martin Schrag expresses the extent of this shift as well as its significance. He says, "The basic thrust of the letter is that of obedience and discipleship to the teachings and example of Jesus Christ as recorded in the New Testament. Jesus Christ is the authority. It is absolutely necessary to be baptized according to the example, the command, and the teaching of Jesus Christ and the apostles. It is necessary to 'publicly profess that which Christ Jesus taught and did without hesitation or fear of men.' Nothing is better than obedience. The disciples sealed their obedience with their blood. All righteousness must be fulfilled. Obedience is so important that those who do not obey have no God. The test of the faith is obedience. Obedience is necessary for salvation." This underscores the extent to which the Early Brethren understood the interrelationship of faith and obedience.

<sup>116</sup>*Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>117</sup>Here Schrag (*ibid.*, 122) explains the relationship of the "inner" and "outer" Word, while quoting Alexander Mack as cited in Durnbaugh's *European Origins of the Brethren*. (Elgin: The Brethren Press, 1958), 385. Mack says, "No one may say to a believer that he should and must believe and obey the Scriptures, because no one can be a believer without the Holy Spirit. . . That which the Holy Spirit ordained for the faithful was written outwardly. All believers are united in it, for the Holy Spirit teaches them inwardly just as the Scriptures teach them outwardly." (The previous quotation is also found in Mack, "Rights and Ordinances," *The Complete Writings of Alexander Mack*, 83.) This discussion clearly reflects the effect Reformed (Calvin) tradition had upon the Brethren. In chapter 7 of his *Institutes*. (Albany: Ages Software, 1997), 100, Calvin discusses the necessity of the Holy Spirit's testimony upon the individual as a prerequisite for understanding the Holy Scriptures.

<sup>118</sup>Both Schrag, "Early Brethren Concept of Authority," and Durnbaugh, "Brethren and the Authority of Scripture," *BLT*, 13:1968, 170-183, express the necessity of both the "inner Word" and "outer Word" as authoritative. According to both, the "outer Word" is dependent upon the inward testimony of the "inner Word" so that the individual encountering the scripture might understand the message. It is necessary to note that the Brethren belief regarding the "inner Word" insists that its ministry upon the individual is not limited to illumination but is inclusive of empowering the individual to obeying the Word. It is necessary to note here that this is a primary distinguishing factor between the Anabaptists (Mennonites) and the Early Brethren. In John Wenger's article, "Biblicism of the Anabaptists," he states that "they followed rigorously the principle of *sola scriptura*: only the Bible is to be followed" [*Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*. (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1957), 171.]. Wenger further expresses this citing Harold Bender, saying, "It alone was authoritative for doctrine and life, for all worship and activity, for all church regulations and discipline." Dale Stoffer argues that the Brethren also were in full agreement with the "great Reformation" principle, *sola scriptura* (*Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1850-1987*, 71). However, while it is true that the Early Brethren affirmed this principle, it does not necessarily mean they shared the same understanding of it. Unlike the Anabaptists, the Early Brethren held the supreme authority as resting in "God as revealed in Jesus Christ" rather than in scripture alone. In Early Brethrenism there is always a sense that the Spirit is involved in interpretation. While I generally agree with Stoffer that all the strands of the Reformation considered the scriptures as normative and divine, I must also acknowledge that the Early Brethren's sense of authority was more complex in that it anticipated new understandings to be revealed within the scripture through the ministry of the "Inner Word." Theirs was not a simple pragmatic literalism. The Early Brethren recognized the role and experience of the inner workings of the Spirit of Christ.

<sup>119</sup>Richard B. Gardner, "Brethren and the Bible," *BLT*, 28:1983, 7-8. The significance of this list as Gardner notes, is that the Brethren "generally resisted attempts to separate God's authority and scriptural authority" (8).

<sup>120</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup>Schrag, "The Early Brethren Concept of Authority," 119.

<sup>122</sup>Mack, "Basic Questions," 24-25.

<sup>123</sup>*Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>124</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup>Wenger, "Biblicism of the Anabaptists," 176. Wenger describes their view as follows: "The Anabaptists regarded scripture as the inspired and authoritative Word of God. But they placed a strong emphasis upon the preparatory role of the Old Testament. They felt that God's final word was in the New Testament, not in the preparatory dispensation of the Old."

<sup>126</sup>Schrag, "The Early Brethren Concept of Authority," 115.

<sup>127</sup>Richard B. Gardner, "Bible," *The Brethren Encyclopedia*. (Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983), 134.

<sup>128</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup>Mack, "Rights and Ordinances," *The Complete Writings of Alexander Mack*, 83.

<sup>130</sup>Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine*, 49.

<sup>131</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup>Durnbaugh, *Brethren Beginnings: The Origin of the Church of the Brethren in Early Eighteenth-Century Europe*, 21.

<sup>133</sup>Donald F. Durnbaugh, "Brethren and the Authority of Scriptures," *BLT*, 13:1968, 174.

<sup>134</sup>Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine*, 49.

<sup>135</sup>While Radical Pietists resisted a scriptural basis for faith, as is expressed by Alexander Mack in "Rights and Ordinances," (81ff), for the Early Brethren "The true faith which is genuine and which is promised eternal life must be a Scriptural faith . . ." (80).

<sup>136</sup>In describing the Pietistic approach to scripture, Stoffer says that it "quite effectively freed the Scriptures from any formalistic methods of interpretation." *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines 1850-1987*, 17.

<sup>137</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup>This concept of a three way negotiation for meaning was first offered by Kenneth J. Archer in his doctoral thesis. In it he describes this process as follows: "The role of the Holy Spirit in the hermeneutical process is to lead and guide the community in understanding the present meaningfulness of Scripture. . . Thus the Spirit does speak and has

more to say than just Scripture. This requires the community to discern the Spirit in the process of negotiating the meaning of the biblical texts as the community faithfully carries on the mission of Jesus into new, different and future contexts. . . . For this reason, the voice of the Spirit cannot be reduced to simple recitation of Scripture, nonetheless it will be connected to the concerned Scripture" ("Forging a New Path: A Contemporary Pentecostal Hermeneutical Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," 213-214). While this description is specifically targeted toward the Pentecostal community, it rings especially true for the Early Brethren community. Their openness to new understandings predisposes the willingness to allow the Spirit to lead their community into new understandings. Moreover this model remains anchored to scripture, thus alleviating the Early Brethren concern of falling into Radical Pietist excesses. For the purpose of clarity, I have opted to describe the interrelationship between the Spirit, scripture, and community as being a "threefold" interrelationship.

<sup>139</sup>Mack, "Rights and Ordinances," *The Complete Writings of Alexander Mack*, 83.



## **The Social Movement Dynamics of Modern American Evangelicalism**

By William P. Payne\*

In discussions with theologically conservative African American Christians, I discovered that the term "evangelical" has a negative association for many of them. They associated the word with a politically conservative agenda and mentioned school prayer, school vouchers, pro-Israel policy, the death penalty, and other political platform issues that are coupled with American evangelicalism as reasons for their antipathy. In the same conversations, some white evangelicals stressed the historical and theological components of the term and focused on those meanings to define the word and themselves. In this article, I describe American evangelicalism in terms of social movement dynamics and offer an alternative word to describe theologically conservative Protestants.

### **The Social Movement Dynamics of Modern American Evangelicalism**

American evangelicalism exists as a theological construct,<sup>1</sup> a historical phenomenon,<sup>2</sup> and a sociological movement. At its core, it is a set of beliefs about God, Scripture, the nature of salvation, and personal morality. Those beliefs are rooted in and grow out of a historical milieu associated with the rise of conservative Christianity from the mid-1700s to the 1900s. In particular, the great awakenings, pietism, revivalism, abolitionism, the holiness movement, world missions, the prohibition movement, the emergence of Christian fundamentalism, and dispensational eschatology are historical factors that strongly influenced the development of modern evangelicalism. Modernity also fashioned the contours of American evangelicalism to the extent that evangelicalism interacted with it and reacted to it, e.g., changing demographics associated with immigration/emigration, secularism, the theory of evolution, biblical criticism, and progressive politics coupled with an aggressive social activism that threatened traditional values. Sociologically, modern evangelicalism became a codified political movement in the 1970s as it reacted to a cluster of issues that endangered the core fabric of a mythical evangelical

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empire. Those issues gave American evangelicals a basis for common cause and the energy necessary to propel themselves into political activity. Some flash issues were the Civil Rights Movement, legalized abortion, the Equal Rights Amendment, gambling, the homosexual lobby, the proliferation of pornography, and an activist judiciary.

Sociologically, when groups of interrelated evangelicals act in collaborate ways, the corresponding behavior may reflect movement dynamics.<sup>3</sup> Undoubtedly, in the last 30 years, American evangelicals organized ideas, material culture, and activities to give structure, unity, and purpose to their evangelical beliefs. It is from this perspective that I wish to reflect on American evangelicalism as a social movement.

### **Some Sociological Theories Associated with Movement Dynamics**

According to Zald and McCarthy (1979), social movements are a response to a systematic strain.<sup>4</sup> The strain leads to a mobilization of people who share the same deprivation or grievance. The strain takes place on the macro-level of society, e.g., immigration, systemic social injustice, economic dislocation, urbanization, health crisis, threat of war, and the like; and influences the micro-level of the individual. The micro-level strain is related to psychological and/or social factors. The micro-level strain in the context of the macro-level reality is what motivates group action. The strain does not have to be "real" or justified to cause a social movement if a social group perceives that it is disadvantaged or threatened. Moral outrage can also elicit group action (Duijvelaar 1996: Chapter 2.3).

According to resource mobilization theory, strain always exists in a society. However, groups do not seek to alleviate it until three criteria are satisfied. First, the threat must be significant enough to motivate individuals into concerted group action. Second, the motivated people must have access to necessary resources so they can organize and operate. Third, the individuals must believe that they can change the situation causing the strain via group action (McAdam 1999). For example, suppose gangs were terrorizing a neighborhood. If the residents felt threatened and believed that the police were not able to protect them, they might form themselves into vigilante groups to patrol their streets. However, before vigilantes patrol the streets, they must be organized, properly resourced, and determined to change the situation. On the other hand, if the residents felt overwhelmingly intimidated by the gangs and did not have access to resources, they would still feel the strain but would not organize to challenge it. According to this theory, a movement's success

depends on its ability to motivate individuals to collective action and to harness necessary internal and external resources to achieve mission goals that reduce the stress (Zald and McCarthy 1979).

Political opportunity theory takes resource mobilization to another level. In order to change public policy, laws, or the corporate culture of a nation-state that causes a group stress, social movements need to gain access to political power. In so doing, they must manipulate the political system so it works on their behalf. If the political climate is hostile to the emerging social movement and if the social movement cannot enlist the support of some politically elite people, it will not have long-term success in its efforts to elicit change or reduce corporate stress (McAdam 1999).

Typically, a symbiotic relationship exists between a political organization and a successful social movement. They may join forces to ride the same wave, to share resources, or to maximize a change in the socio-political landscape. In America, a major political party must have many popular alliances. By virtue of the huge diversity in America, all major political organizations are heterogeneous. Through alliances, political parties are able to acquire voting blocks. This allows the political organization to elect its own people (gain power) and further an ideologically motivated agenda.

Sometimes a social movement is energized and/or created when a political organization seeks to establish a new base of support with an underrepresented group (non-aligned or nonvoting).<sup>5</sup> For example, a political organization might champion the cause of single mothers and then organize them into a political force provided that the new group and those who sympathize with it vote. This would benefit the political organization by increasing its share of the voting market. At other times, a nonpolitical group outside the political arena may define itself and then seek to use the political mechanism of the day as a means to promote its cause and gain the necessary political power to change society. In this case, the social movement is careful to define itself apart from its relationship to the political organization. If the political organization does not represent the social movement's cause or acquire the needed power to further the aims of the social movement, the social movement may transfer its influence and voters to another political organization (McAdam 1999).<sup>6</sup>

In summary, numerous studies have determined that religious movements with the expressed goals of effecting change in society fall within the conceptualization of a social movement and can be analyzed in terms of resource mobilization strategies (Hall 1998). Additionally, there is a clear relationship between components of modern American evangelicalism and the

Republican Party, e.g., the Moral Majority and the Christian Coalition. Voting patterns also bear witness to this relationship. Hence, political opportunity theory can also be utilized to describe and interpret modern American evangelicalism.

### **Historical Foundations to the Modern American Evangelical Movement**

Following the Civil War, most American Protestants believed that the United States was a Christian nation. Protestant evangelicals considered their faith to be the normative American creed. From their perspective, they were correct. From the time of the great revivals in 1790 through 1870, the history of America was marked by successive advances of evangelicalism. Methodists and Baptists were the dominant denominations and were firmly established in every sector of the country. Few believed that the progress of evangelicalism would stop. For many in the North, the Civil War itself was evidence that God's righteousness was being established in America and that his kingdom would come (Marsden 1980:11). America had a manifest destiny that was from God.

At the same time, American evangelicals were so diverse that they defied facile generalizations or attempts to group them into a national category because Reformed, Free Church and Wesleyan traditions had particular theological beliefs and historical antecedents. In other words, 19<sup>th</sup> century evangelicalism did not represent a homogenous grouping of likeminded Christians. However, unity existed in the diversity. Latourette captured the essence of 19<sup>th</sup> century evangelicalism when he wrote,

"In no country . . . was Evangelicalism as prominent and as permeating as in the United States . . . . It was spread through revivalism—in camp meetings, by itinerate evangelists, by resident ministers who employed the methods of the evangelists, and through Sunday schools. It assumed belief in the Bible as the Word of God, the basic sinfulness of man, and in conversion through faith in the redemption wrought by God through Christ" (1961:82).

In Latourette's descriptive definition, evangelistic zeal is a defining quality of American evangelicalism and is as significant to its essence as its theological content. One informed the other. Through mass evangelism, 19<sup>th</sup> century evangelicals advanced their influence and changed the social order one person at a time. When a person was "saved," he or she was connected to a church and conformed to its value system. To use Dean Kelley's terminology (1986), 19<sup>th</sup> century evangelical churches were socially strong and strict



organizations that made real demands on their converts and maintained high expectations related to group conformity and personal behavior.

Interestingly, Latourette did not mention social action in his definition. From the late 18<sup>th</sup> century through the 19<sup>th</sup> century, northern and southern evangelicals followed different paths related to the social gospel. Typically, northern evangelicals were more aggressive in pursuing the whole gospel, i.e., a combination of evangelism and social gospel issues related to core faith themes. Southern evangelicals tended to individualize faith by focusing on personal holiness and by staying clear of controversial public policy debates.

The dichotomy between northern activism and southern individualism can be traced back to the founding of the country. The Puritan (New England) vision of theocracy and conformity ran deep in the blood of northeastern evangelicals in the 1800s. The agrarian ideals of the South and the survival mindset on the frontier with its history of circuit riders and camp meetings focused southern evangelicals on personal religion. The Jefferson and Hamilton debates in the 1790s, point to the regional split in America. However, slavery and reconstruction functioned as more immediate causes for the regional dichotomy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>7</sup>

In order to be successful in evangelizing the South and in maintaining a dominant influence in that region, southern evangelicals compromised on moral issues related to race. For example, a politically active church that challenged slavery and the moral underpinnings of it could not have broad, popular support in the antebellum South. So, in order to have access to the South and to African Americans, southern evangelicals emphasized personal religion and minimized conflict with the wider culture. In the 1790s and early 1800s, southern evangelical preachers were very opposed to the institution of slavery but chose not to make it an overriding issue because of the negative consequences associated with it. In time, southern evangelicals became accustomed to slavery and did not feel the ire of earlier evangelicals. Methodism's North/South split in 1844 reflects great divergence and passion over this issue and further illustrates the dichotomy between northern and southern evangelicals. The formation of the Southern Baptist Church points to a similar movement in that tradition.

Southern evangelicals evangelized African Americans, formed them into churches, promoted their wellbeing, and gave them limited autonomy in their religious lives, but they did not fight the institution of slavery or promote equality in the public arena. In time, southern evangelicals defended slavery and segregation on biblical grounds. Southern evangelicalism was indigenous to the culture of the white South. In fact, it became so at home in the dominant culture

that it ceased to be distinguished from it or to be a prophet in its midst (Payne 2001).

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, northern evangelicalism had also distanced itself from the social gospel because of the social gospel's association with theological and political liberalism. By the 1920s, there was a great divide between the two. Liberals tended to focus on social gospel issues and evangelicals focused on evangelism and missions. Even when evangelicals advanced social gospel issues, the issues were subordinate to evangelism and church growth (Moberg 1972).

Linda Smith writes, "As a backlash against liberalism, the inheritors of the evangelical tradition went into a period of retreat and separatism which had a profound impact on social concern. . . . All progressive social concern, private as well as political, was nearly eliminated among evangelicals by the end of the 1900-1930 period" (1989:25). She attributes the decline to the rising influence of liberalism and the concomitant stigma of the social gospel. She says that the social gospel emphasized Christian obligation to respond to physical need and oppression and it prioritized a social action that attempted to establish the kingdom of God on earth through human efforts. Evangelicals rejected "kingdom of God" talk. Most projected the term into a future millennium in which God would rule on earth. In fact, most gave up on the present world order, thinking that it was beyond fixing. In light of this, evangelism and world missions became its priorities, i.e., saving people from this world.<sup>8</sup>

From the 1870s to the 1920s, a series of social developments threatened evangelicalism. First, the religious climate following the Civil War was very unreceptive to conservative Christianity in the North. "The Emancipation Proclamation removed the one adhesive, abolitionism, that had united northern evangelicals, so that after the Civil War evangelicalism in the North began to dissipate in a flurry of theological controversies and denominational disputes" (Balmer 2003:1).

Second, the meteoritic growth of Roman Catholicism challenged the religious hegemony and political influence of Protestantism.<sup>9</sup> Immigration of Roman Catholics and the skyrocketing birthrates of the Roman Catholic immigrants are primary reasons for the tremendous growth of Roman Catholicism in America. Ironically, southern evangelicals tended to vote with the Roman Catholics and against the northern evangelical tradition that was associated with the Republican Party. Marsden puts it this way;

"The Democratic Party [became] the party of outsiders. Its two strongest components were Catholics and Southerners,

two groups who had almost nothing in common except their common disdain of Republicanism, with its self-righteous evangelical penchant to impose its version of Christian morality on the whole nation. Northern evangelicals, such as Congregationalists, New School Presbyterians, most Methodists, and most Baptists, usually voted Republican" (1991:90).

Third, rapid urbanization and industrialism shifted the cultural and political center of the nation away from small-town America. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, evangelicalism found its greatest receptivity among the lower classes and rural inhabitants. Across America, cities seemed resistant to its evangelistic efforts and were a bastion for liberalism, immigrants, progressive idealism, and sin of every sort. Even though great evangelical traditions grew-up around prominent cities, the political influence of evangelicalism diminished as the political influence of cities grew.<sup>10</sup>

Fourth, the spread of science, technology, biblical criticism and evolutionary thought caused people to question the simple faith that evangelicals preached. Much debate focused on the accuracy and authority of Scripture. The Scopes (Monkey) Trial vividly illustrated this.<sup>11</sup> The clash between modernity and conservative Christianity was not new to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Many of the liberal churches became liberal because they adopted a progressive position on these issues. The liberal churches had their greatest strength in the North and in the cities. As liberal Christianity increased in the North, the center of evangelicalism shifted to the south so that evangelicalism became associated with the South and rural America in general.<sup>12</sup> A casual analysis of the membership records of evangelical churches during this time will demonstrate this point.

Finally, the dominant culture rebelled against the narrowness of biblical evangelicalism. Linder captures the essence of the situation that divided "evangelicals" from "modernists:"

The early 1920s found social patterns in chaos. Traditionalists worried that everything valuable was ending. Younger modernists no longer asked whether society would approve of their behavior, only whether their behavior met the approval of their intellect. Intellectual experimentation flourished. Americans danced to the sound of the Jazz Age, showed their contempt for alcoholic prohibition, debated abstract art and Freudian theories. (2002)

Before the 1960s, 20<sup>th</sup> century evangelicals tended to stay out of the political arena for reasons that have already been discussed.<sup>13</sup> They promoted their agenda through their churches, publications, revivals, radio programs, missionary work, Christian colleges, and prominent leaders. However, as American politics evolved, "Southern Democrats" became a fixture in American politics.

The alliance between theological conservatives (in the South) and the more liberal of the national parties can be explained largely in historical, regional, and class terms. The force of tradition kept theological conservatives firmly attached to the party that had reestablished white political dominance in the wake of Radical Republican Reconstruction. The linkage was further cemented in the 1930s by the popularity of the New Deal social welfare programs that attacked poverty and agricultural distress in the region. (Le Beau 2003:3)

### **The Emerging of Modern Evangelicalism: 1960-2000<sup>14</sup>**

The Democratic Party had a very complex and diverse constituency. It was the party of immigrants, African Americans, Jews, Roman Catholics, liberal Protestants, and southern evangelicals. As long as the party represented the political interests of southern evangelicals, they remained a member of the alliance. However, in the 1960s, the nomination of President Kennedy, a Roman Catholic, and support for the Civil Rights Movement caused large numbers of southern evangelicals to vote for Republican candidates or George Wallace, a radical southern Democrat who vigorously opposed desegregation. Wallace ran as an Independent in 1968. His candidacy illustrated the growing schism between the Democratic Party and white Southerners, and was a prescience of things to come (Eskridge 2003:5).

*Time Magazine* hailed 1976 as the year of the Evangelical. In that year, a born-again, Southern Baptist from the heart of Dixie won the presidency. President Carter talked about his Christian faith and why it was central to his character.<sup>15</sup> Surprisingly, he carried the Roman Catholic and Jewish votes by the same margins as previous Democratic presidential candidates. He also carried virtually the entire African American vote (Miller 1980:332). On the surface, it appeared that Carter held the Democratic coalition together and that southern evangelicals were represented in his coalition. However, a majority of white southerners voted for President Ford (Public Opinion 1985). Since the white South was mostly evangelical, one can assume that a majority of southern evangelicals did not vote for Carter.



Allow me to use a personal anecdote to illustrate the point. My family hails from southern Georgia. In the 1970s, my late aunt and uncle lived in Plains, Georgia and owned the house in which President Carter was born. I went to high school with a close cousin of President Carter. When I was a child, my parents and my entire family were staunch Democrats. However, neither my parents nor my older brother voted for him in 1976. In 1980, my family admired him and respected him, but it did not resonate with his politics or feel that he represented our political ideals. Interestingly, at family reunions, we talked about Carter because so many of my aunts and uncles knew him personally. However, no one ever talked about his politics or how they voted. By 1980, my family and many of my aunts had become Republicans. I think we were typical of the majority of evangelical southerners at that time. According to my late father, he would have switched sooner. However, he believed that most elections were determined by the Democratic primaries. As such, if he wanted to influence the election, he had to vote in the Democratic primaries. Due to mass defections, that changed by 1980.

The return of conservative Protestants to organized political action, manifested in what has been labeled the New Christian Right, was facilitated by a number of local movements that developed during the social fragmentation of the 1970s. (Le Beau 2003:4). Each movement focused on issues that threatened evangelical culture and produced moral outrage in their ranks. For example, the Equal Rights Amendment challenged the evangelical ideal related to the role of women in society. Many believed that the traditional social structure of the evangelical home reflected a biblical model. They projected that ideal onto society at large. In that ideal, a male hierarchy existed. Objectionable schoolbooks, the continued debate on human origins, school prayer, homosexual rights, sexual immorality, abortion laws, and a series of Supreme Court rulings also outraged evangelicals and pushed them into an activist mode. In an attempt to combat these social evils and preserve the moral underpinnings of American society, many grass roots organizations formed. Focus on the Family is an obvious example.<sup>16</sup>

However, in order to advance the evangelical social agenda on the national level, evangelicals needed political sponsorship. Consequently, an alliance was formed between religious and secular conservatives within the Republican Party. It was a symbiotic relationship in which both joined hands to pursue a similar vision for America. The enemy was big government and its liberal social agenda that threatened traditional religious and economic values (Le Beau 2003:5). Televangelists, Christian radio, a plethora of Christian

printed materials, Evangelical, Fundamental, and Pentecostal churches, national evangelical associations, and an assortment of political action committees blanketed the nation with the message of the Christian Right.

The election of President Reagan in 1980 cemented the relationship between secular conservatives and evangelicals. During the next 12 years, the Republican Party continued to push the evangelical social agenda and the Christian Right continued to mobilize its constituency to vote for Republican candidates. Jerry Falwell of the Moral Majority, Pat Robertson of the 700 Club, James Dobson of Focus on the Family, and Chuck Colson of Prison Fellowship and Watergate fame became household names. Scandals related to televangelists tarnished the image of the Christian Right but they did not derail its agenda.

The 1992 defeat of President Bush marked a low-point for Christian conservatives. For the next two years, the Democrats controlled the White House and Congress. However, in 1994, the Republican Contract with America and huge gains in the House and Senate ensured that the social agenda of evangelicals would continue.

The Republican Contract with America and the election of 1994 demonstrated the national influence and movement dynamics of the Christian Right. The contract focused the party and gave it a tangible vision for the American people. It advocated the following causes: restoring religious equality, local control of education, promoting school choice, protecting parental rights, family-friendly tax relief, restoring respect for human life, restricting pornography, privatizing the arts, and punishing criminals not victims. Each of these points focused on an issue that had stressed and threatened evangelical Christians. In support of the contract and the Republican Party, the Christian Coalition claimed 1.6 million members in 1,600 national chapters and 25 million dollars in political action funds (Le Beau 2003:6).

During President Clinton's second term, Republicans controlled both the House of Representatives and the Senate. This demonstrated that Republicans still resonated with the public and that many Americans liked Clinton but did not trust him with a united government.

### **Evaluation of Modern American Evangelicalism as a Social Movement**

A demographic shift occurred in American evangelicalism at the same time that it became a politically active force in the Republican Party. The shift was signaled in the early 1960s, but was not obvious until later. Before the 1960s, evangelicals huddled in rural America and insulated themselves from

change. Most lacked the educational attainment, occupational status, or financial worth of the average American (Roof 1987). However, the children of these evangelicals surpassed the educational levels of their parents. As they did, they increased their net worth and occupational status. Many moved to the cities or suburbs in search of good jobs. As these new evangelicals climbed the corporate ladder and became middle class Americans, their political lethargy turned to activity. Plus, in the cities and the workplaces, they saw how the liberal agenda threatened their own values. Upward mobility also exposed these younger evangelicals to new networking possibilities and contacts with "movers and shakers." They discovered that they had many of the same concerns as traditional Republicans related to government, taxes, and the economy. A new class of evangelical clergy also entered the scene. They were very educated and committed to a social agenda (Wald 1997:238, Beinart 1998:25-26, Le Beau 2003:7).

In terms of strain theory, the younger evangelicals and their parents shared the same tensions with the society as it changed in the 1960s. The parents led a silent protest against the Democratic Party by changing their voting allegiance. The younger evangelicals followed in the footsteps of their parents and took it to a higher level. They had the resources, motivation, and optimistic determination needed to organize themselves in a concerted effort to change society. They did this through many grass roots and national organizations. The organizations they formed took on a movement dynamic that influenced other like-minded evangelicals and non-evangelicals who sympathized with their agenda. For example, the pro-life and pro-family agenda of the Republican Party attracted many Roman Catholics, Mormons, and Moonies who joined forces with the evangelicals in a common cause.

Political opportunity can be demonstrated in several ways. First, when the Democratic Party no longer met the expectations of the evangelical constituency, the evangelicals stopped supporting the party. Second, the Republican Party realized a political opportunity and the younger evangelicals needed political sponsorship. Third, the two groups formed a symbiotic partnership. Evangelicals brought vision, moral indignation, energy, people power, money, and voters to the Republican Party. The Republicans gave the evangelicals a political machine through which to work on local and national levels, leadership, a national pulpit, and political power.

Interestingly, a unique sociological picture of modern American evangelicalism develops when its movement dynamics are viewed through the interpretive lens of classical Marxism. In terms of Marx's theory,<sup>17</sup> in the 1950s, most traditional evangelicals were blue collar workers, farmers, and petty

managers. They were far removed from the center of political activity and did not have much real influence. They had a self-identity through which they maintained a sharp distinction between themselves and other social/ethnic/religious groups. By means of a religion that fostered political apathy, they remained an inert force. In time, they became conscious of their disadvantage and they rose up against the political hegemony that used alliances with many divergent groups to maintain its own power base. In this sense, the rise of evangelicals was a class struggle. The religion that was used to hold the white southerners down became a means by which they organized themselves and broke their chains of oppression. Their movement represents a revolt that attempted to change the social order and their economic condition. In that revolt, evangelicals were pitted against the Democratic leadership and many other social groups that identified with the Democratic agenda. Most specifically, many were opposed to the Civil Rights Movement.

In light of the political polarity between the American evangelical movement of the last 30 years and African American Christians who identify with the Civil Rights Movement, strain theory, political opportunity theory, and Marxist insights are useful.

### **Application**

Since 1992, the Christian Right voted for Republican candidates by a 3 to 1 margin. Similarly, African American Protestants voted overwhelmingly for Democratic candidates. In the 2000 presidential election, voters who identify themselves as Evangelical voted 4 to 1 for Bush. On the other hand, 90 percent of African Americans voted for Gore.<sup>18</sup> No data was given for theologically conservative black voters. However, since the black Church was the center of the Civil Rights Movement<sup>19</sup> and strongly supported the Democratic Party, one can assume that their constituents also voted for Gore by overwhelming margins. These voting patterns clearly indicate that a political divide exists between white evangelicals and conservative black Protestants.

Theologically and denominationally, there are close ties between evangelicals and conservative black Christians.<sup>20</sup> There is a historical reason for this linkage. During the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, most African Americans were theologically conservative for three reasons. First, they lacked access to higher education and liberal theology. Second, a large majority lived in the South where evangelical churches dominated the religious landscape. Hence, evangelicals had more access to African Americans by reason of proximity and they were the most active in evangelizing them (Marsden 1991). For example,



in 1890, 6,752,000 of the total 7,388,000 African Americans lived in 15 southern states. In eight out of 15 of the southern states, Methodists and Baptists combined to equal over 80 percent of the population.<sup>21</sup> Even in southern states with a higher concentration of Roman Catholics, most African Americans aligned with evangelical traditions after the Civil War.

Immediately following emancipation, thousands of Negroes left the Roman Catholic Church. It is said that in Louisiana alone 65,000 fell away. The reason seems to have been the desire for full independence from white control and the attraction of the Baptist and Methodist churches with their emotional appeal and their autonomy. (Latourette 1961:80)<sup>22</sup>

Third, because of their African roots, black Protestants did not view the Christian message through the same lens as liberal, white Protestants. Greek categories of thought and the theological controversies that shaped Western Protestantism were not major influences in black traditions. Accordingly, their Christianity was more immediately biblical (Marsden 1991:51).

Marsden captures this point well. He avers that black Protestants were shaped by the evangelical heritage of America and preserved it. However, because of racial segregation that isolated them from white evangelicals, they seldom used the term "evangelical" to describe themselves (1991:46).

Yet, in terms of self-identity and point of reference, the black church focuses on its history of oppression and segregation more than it does on its shared theology with evangelicals. In fact, for most of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, evangelicals have been linked with the oppressors by deed, association, and lack of action to the contrary.

The black church shares much of its struggle with other minorities, immigrants, Jews, and Roman Catholics. That common experience bonds these divergent groups together in the political realm. For conservative black Christians, the Civil Rights Movement has a symbolic and transforming value. The Democratic Party is a national organization that advocates for African Americans and offers them hope in their struggle. Transformation has to come from within the community, but the community seeks outside resources to organize, equip, and mobilize itself. In so doing, African Americans have attempted to use the Democratic Party to achieve their goals in the same way that modern evangelicals have used the Republican Party to achieve their goals.

The modern evangelical movement and the Civil Rights Movement are opposed to each other in terms of political objectives. When blacks hear the term evangelical, they do not think about conservative theology or evangelism. Rather, they think about a political movement that works against their interests and they remember their history of oppression. For better or worse,

“evangelical” has a different meaning for the African American community than it does for most white evangelicals.

### **So, What Do We Call Ourselves?**

The question remains, is there an umbrella term that can be used to describe white evangelicals and theologically conservative black Protestants who share an “evangelical” theology? Marsden urges the use of “Bible-believing” Christian (1991:49). However, that term sounds pejorative and implies that other Christians do not believe the Bible. Plus, progressive evangelicals would prefer to focus on a broader moniker. “Theologically Conservative Christian” describes panevangelicalism well; however, conservative is associated with politics and implies that one is not an activist. If it were shortened to “TCC” it might work. Within the Protestant world, “charismatic” has achieved widespread use and has a positive meaning. Like “evangelical,” it is based on a Greek word that has a biblical usage. However, it does not describe most evangelicals. In institutional settings, traditional black worship is often referred to as a “Gospel Service.” One can also refer to a gospel choir or gospel music. The term “gospel” is a synonym for evangel which is the root for evangelical.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps we could call ourselves “Gospelites or gospel Christians?” Gospel is already used as an adjective when someone refers to the “gospel truth” or the gospel message.

### **Conclusion**

In this paper I have attempted to demonstrate how modern evangelicalism functions as a social movement. I have also attempted to demonstrate why conservative black Protestants do not resonate with that term. Additionally, I have shown that social movement theories offer a unique and often neglected lens by which to view and interpret religious movements. Finally, I suggested that “gospel” could be used as a dynamic equivalent for “evangelical” because it does not have baggage attached to its usage.

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<sup>1</sup> According to Marsden, evangelicalism includes all Christians that affirm the basic beliefs of the old 19<sup>th</sup> century evangelical consensus: the Reformation doctrine of the final authority of the Bible, the real historical character of God’s saving work recorded in Scripture, salvation to eternal life based on the redemptive work of Christ, the importance of evangelism and missions, and the importance of the spiritually transformed life (1991:4-5).

<sup>2</sup> Evangelical comes from biblical term for “gospel,” or the evangel. Historically, evangelical described a type of preaching that emphasized the gospel message and was associated with the “evangelical” awakenings that spread over England and America in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In fact, the British refer to the Second Great Awakening as the Evangelical Awakening. Early revivals emphasized simple Bible preaching in a very zealous form so as to elicit a religious experience (conversion or awakening) in the hearers through the present power of the Holy Spirit manifested in visible ways. Most denominations were influenced by evangelicalism at this time. Circuit riders and camp meetings are often associated with it.

<sup>3</sup> Marsden differentiates between evangelicals and “card carrying” evangelicals. Card carrying evangelicals represent a self-conscious, interdenominational movement, with leaders, publications, and institutions with which people from many subgroups identify. The test of being a card carrying evangelical is that one has a strong transdenominational identity, regardless of the person’s church affiliation (1991:5-6).

<sup>4</sup> McCarthy and Zald discussed resource mobilization theory in the 1960s and are the architects of the concept. Many others have utilized it and modified it. Zald and McCarty differentiated between a social movement (a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure), a social movement organization (a complex, or formal organization which identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or a counter movement and attempts to implement these goals), a social movement industry (all the social movement organizations with relatively similar goals that have a basic unity in purpose), and a social movement sector (all social movement industries in a society, no matter to which social movement they belong) (Zald and McCarthy 1979:2).

<sup>5</sup> “A very good example of this being the division between northern and southern Democrats during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960. The northern Democrats saw the newly urbanized and northern dwelling blacks as a political mass that must be taken into account in order for them to take further political power away the northern Republicans. At the same time, the southern Democrats . . . wanted nothing to do with the policies of their northern brethren.” (Agnone 2000:5)

<sup>6</sup> For example, during the Clinton presidency, many evangelical organizations threatened to pull away from the Republican Party if the party went soft on core evangelical issues. I heard James Dobson of Focus on the Family speak very adamantly to this issue on several occasions. At that time, the Republican Party was attempting to increase its appeal to nonaligned Americans who were turned-off by the “vitriolic rhetoric of the religious right.”

## The Social Movement Dynamics of Modern American Evangelicalism

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<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, Baptists and Methodist “evangelicals” were outspoken critics of the established church in New England and they waged a fierce war for disestablishment.

<sup>8</sup> “Rejecting the prevailing postmillennialism which taught that Christ’s Kingdom would grow out of the spiritual and moral progress of this age, dispensational premillennialists said that the churches and the culture were declining and that Christians would see Christ’s kingdom only after he personally returned to rule in Jerusalem.” (Marsden 1991:39)

<sup>9</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Methodist churches represented the largest faith tradition in America. In fact, the Methodist Episcopal Church became the largest American denomination in 1812. Baptist churches represented the second largest faith tradition. In the 1920s, the Baptists became the largest Protestant Church in America. However, by that time, Roman Catholics were the largest denomination in America (Gaustad 2001).

<sup>10</sup> Before 1870, awakenings were common in the great cities of the North and effected the educated. The great revival of 1857-1858 centered in the cities and grew out of noonday prayer meetings that were led by businessmen. During the Civil War, revivals also swept through army camps in the North and the South (Marsden 1980:11).

<sup>11</sup> “In a response to the new social patterns set in motion by modernism, a wave of revivalism developed, becoming especially strong in the American South. Who would dominate American culture--the modernists or the traditionalists? Journalists were looking for a showdown, and they found one in a Dayton, Tennessee courtroom in the summer of 1925. There a jury was to decide the fate of John Scopes, a high school biology teacher charged with illegally teaching the theory of evolution. The guilt or innocence of John Scopes, and even the constitutionality of Tennessee’s anti-evolution statute, mattered little. The meaning of the trial emerged through its interpretation as a conflict of social and intellectual values” (Linder 2002).

<sup>12</sup> “Going into the 20<sup>th</sup>-century evangelicalism still held the status of an American ‘folk religion’ in many sectors of the United states – particularly in the South” (Eskridge 2003:1). After the 1920s, fundamentalists, perceiving that American culture had turned against them, retreated from public life, but they did not disappear. Some argue that they retreated to the obscurity of the South where the culture was more sympathetic to their ideals. Before this, fundamentalists were represented in most denominations. After the 1920s, they began to form themselves into separate churches. As they did, they constructed a huge subculture of churches, denominations, Bible institutes, colleges, seminaries, mission organizations, and publishing houses. This



provided a firm foundation for their re-emergence as a national political force in the 1970s (Balmer 2003).

<sup>13</sup> The prohibition movement and the fight to keep evolution out of the public schools are obvious exceptions. The conservatives won both battles but lost the cultural war associated with them.

<sup>14</sup> This section is very indebted to the work of Bryan F. Le Beau of Creighton University. His article, "The Political Mobilization of the New Christian Right" (2003), informed my thinking and writing.

<sup>15</sup> In today's terms, President Carter was a radical evangelical in the tradition of Ron Sider and Tony Campolo. Many conservative Christians thought he was too progressive. Others called him liberal.

<sup>16</sup> According to the Focus on the Family website, "Focus on the Family began in 1977 in response to Dr. James Dobson's increasing concern for the American family."

<sup>17</sup> According to Marx, history and individual societies are progressing in accordance with his dialectical theory related to class struggle and competition for resources. In society, the division of labor produces class distinctions. Those who own the means of production manipulate those who labor in order to maintain the hierarchy that protects their own economic advantage and social control. Over time, those who produce will attempt to free themselves from the inequity of their plight by confronting those who control the means of production and capital. The social dichotomy pits classes against each other. In the ensuing struggle, religion, government, and political association are used to exert social control and to gain influence over the opposing class. In many cases, violence is the natural outcome of the struggle. Of course, Marx believed that dialectical conflict was the means by which society progressed through various stages. In this scenario, class struggle may take the form of a social movement.

<sup>18</sup> (See "2000 Presidential Elections: How Faith and Race Influenced Voting" at [http://www.religioustolerance.org/vote\\_rel.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/vote_rel.htm)).

<sup>19</sup> Jon Agnone states that black churches were the institutional center of the Civil Rights Movement. "The churches gave the movement an internal institution at their disposal in which to gather for meetings, to use as a communications headquarters, and as a general safe haven in which the white oppressors could not legally intervene. This was made possible, in part, due to the migration of large numbers of blacks to cities, which led to institution building, community organizing, and a dense social network through which protest could be organized" (2000:7).

<sup>20</sup> “Even most black Protestants, who have been almost entirely separated from whites since the Civil War, have enough common heritage to be readily identified as “evangelical,” though they seldom use the word” (Marsden 1991:65).

<sup>21</sup> See National Census for 1890 and The New Historical Atlas of Religion in America (Gaustad 2001:376-381).

<sup>22</sup> In 1812, before the formation of the African American Methodist churches, African Americans equaled 33 percent of Methodist membership in the southern states or 33,568 people. It is estimated that 60,000 African American attended Methodist preaching or were in some other way connected to the Methodist Episcopal Church at that time (Payne 2001:300-322 and 430-448).

<sup>23</sup> In defining the term “evangelical,” Timothy George states that evangelicals are gospel people, i.e., “Evangelicals are a worldwide family of Bible-believing Christians committed to sharing with everyone everywhere the transforming good news of new life in Jesus Christ” (1999).

**The Antinomian Controversy and the Puritan Vision:  
A Historical Perspective on Christian Leadership**  
by Jeffrey M. Kahl\*

**Introduction**

The American Puritans are perhaps the most interesting, the most complex, and even the most misunderstood players in the fascinating saga called American History. Radical skeptics such as Perry Miller and William McLoughlin, as well as committed Christians such as H. Richard Niebuhr and J. I. Packer, have credited the Puritans with establishing the foundations of America's intellectual and cultural life. Undoubtedly this is the reason why the Puritans have merited the scholarly attention (on a much grander scale than other American colonial groups) not only of theologians and historians, but sociologists, psychologists, economists, literary critics, rhetoricians, artists, and others. It has been nearly four hundred years since they set foot on American soil, and information surrounding these colonists continues to attract the curiosity of scholars and laypersons alike.

The Antinomian controversy of 1637 has elicited special attention as a crucial event in early American history, and researchers bringing different presuppositions and perspectives to the task have yielded different interpretations of the actual events surrounding the controversy.

Writers such as Anne F. Withington, Jack Schwartz, and Richard B. Morris have concluded that the proceedings against Anne Hutchinson could rightly be characterized as a "show trial" and that the Puritan elders were more interested in their own cause than in the cause of justice.<sup>1</sup>

More theologically-minded scholars such as David Hall, William K. B. Stoever and Jesper Rosenmeier have attempted to discern an intensive debate over theological minutia (such as the precise relationship between nature and grace) as being the motivating force behind the controversy.<sup>2</sup>

Writers with strong feminist sympathies have emphasized the role that Hutchinson's sex played in the course and eventual outcome of the controversy, while others have attempted to analyze how the Puritans dealt with social deviants in general.<sup>3</sup>

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Emery Battis has even attempted to interpret the controversy by dissecting the psychological profile of Anne Hutchinson, discerning in her admiration of John Cotton a deep yearning for fatherly affection, and explaining her behavior at her trial as the result of "menopausal symptoms."<sup>4</sup>

I certainly see some validity in all of these approaches and perspectives (although in my mind, the last one raises more questions than it answers!). Within the confines of this study, however, I choose to modify and assert the perspective of the great historian Edmund S. Morgan, who viewed the controversy through the eyes of the Puritan leadership. In essence, my thesis is that the Puritan elders of New England *primarily* proceeded against Hutchinson not for theological reasons but for the very practical purpose of maintaining the implementation of their vision. In this sense I do not vilify the Puritan leadership as others might. For while they might not be viewed as "fair" or "tolerant" by modern standards, I do believe that their actions were justifiable (or at least excusable) given the nature of their task and the realities of the situation.<sup>5</sup>

In the pages that follow, I intend to provide a synopsis of the major historical events in the controversy itself, and then to analyze specific historical evidence that supports my thesis. I will also provide reflections on the continuing relevance of such a perspective, specifically regarding leadership in the Christian church today.

### **I. Overview of the Antinomian Controversy**

#### **A. The Major Events**

The Puritan movement developed in England as a reactionary movement against the political and religious policies of Queen Elizabeth I, her successors, and the English Parliament. Its adherents did not question the unity of church and state, but they did reject the governmental policies that allowed for continued "Catholic elements" in a state church that should have been more thoroughly "reformed" in doctrine and practice. Leland Ryken's description of Puritanism as a "protest movement" is very appropriate.<sup>6</sup>

In its early stages it was a reaction against the Elizabethan Settlement, but because of Elizabeth's policy of broad toleration, the Puritans themselves were at least able to work "within the system." However, in 1628 Charles I appointed William Laud as Bishop of London (and later Archbishop of Canterbury). Laud's policies involved the active elimination of any sign of nonconformity in the Church of England. This (coupled with Charles'



dissolution of Parliament in 1629) forced the Puritans to consolidate and act, for it was obvious that the government would not only *not* support them, but it would actively oppose them. It is during this era that the initial Puritan migrations to the New World took place.<sup>7</sup>

Despite their common resolve to reform the government and Church of England, there was a great deal of diversity among the Puritans themselves. Certainly they held some basic theological tenets in common (for example, salvation by grace or the authority of scripture). But there was no unanimity among them as far as their practical piety is concerned. In the wake of Perry Miller's voluminous research on the Puritans, several scholars have noted and documented incredible diversity—even tension—within Puritanism, long before the Antinomian controversy in England erupted.

In her recent book *Orthodoxies in Massachusetts*, historian Janice Knight specifically takes issue with Perry Miller's notion of Puritanism as a monolithic orthodoxy, with deviants such as Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams being few and far between. On the contrary, Knight perceives two distinct theological/spiritual perspectives emanating from the Puritan movement that can be traced back to its earliest beginnings in England. The "Intellectual Fathers" descended intellectually from William Perkins and Williams Ames and included leaders such as Thomas Hooker, Thomas Shepard, Peter Bulkeley, and John Winthrop. The "Spiritual Brethren," on the other hand, had their English roots in the leadership of Richard Sibbes and John Preston, and their American representatives were John Cotton, John Davenport, and Henry Vane.<sup>8</sup>

A more intensive analysis can be found in Jerald C. Brauer's *Types of Puritan Piety*, which notices four distinct expressions of the Puritan consciousness, again going back to its earliest formulations in England. The four types are: 1) "Nomism," emphasizing law and order; 2) "evangelicalism," emphasizing the preaching of the good news; 3) "rationalism," emphasizing God's truth found in nature and reason; and 4) "mysticism," emphasizing the soul's union with God in Christ.<sup>9</sup>

It is unlikely that any of the Puritan writers would fit neatly into one of these categories, to the complete exclusion of the others. (Historical figures never completely conform to our categories, do they?) However, I do hold to the view that individual Puritans certainly did write and think from a perspective that may have made them more sensitive to one type of theology and piety. We must remember that these people were not uneducated peasants who unthinkingly accepted the doctrines of a theological demagogue. Most were well educated Christians who knew how to think for themselves. It would personally surprise me if a movement composed of such people did *not* include

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a healthy level of diversity. Understanding this dynamic of Puritanism may help us to interpret the reality of the Antinomian controversy itself.

This diverse movement was able to maintain a somewhat-united front in England, because its focus was on its opposition to Charles I and Archbishop Laud. (A modern parallel - possibly but only slightly exaggerated - would be the student groups of the 1960's, who spoke with a united voice as long as their attention was on that which they opposed.) The problem in New England was that this opposition movement was then required to institutionalize its own understanding of church and state, with the added inconvenience of doing so on a virgin continent with virtually no civilization in place (by 17<sup>th</sup>-century European standards, at least). This would be, in a phrase later coined by Rev. Samuel Danforth, their "errand into the wilderness."<sup>10</sup>

Their expectations of the New World differed, as did their reactions to the realities that they encountered there.<sup>11</sup> (These realities will be discussed briefly in the next section of the paper). For the sake of this inquiry, however, let it be said that following the initial euphoria of their arrival in Massachusetts Bay, the colonists were generally fueled by a desire to re-create the world that they had just left. The world that they entered was harsh and unpredictable, and this drove them to establish a stable social structure, forge strong social ties, and to preserve the cultural dynamics that existed in East Anglia.<sup>12</sup> Their covenant theology, which prescribed not only a relationship between man and God but also between man and his community, was another incentive for "thinking organizationally," as it were...for determining the good of the whole group and not merely the good of individuals.<sup>13</sup>

The initial migration of Puritans to the Bay Colony took place in 1629-1630, with John Winthrop as one of the leading organizers. Edmund S. Morgan notes that even as arrangements were being made to secure passengers for the voyage, Winthrop found it necessary to think "politically." It was Winthrop's privilege to reject those non-Puritans who wished to join the expedition for purely economic reasons. However, he realized the necessity to have skilled persons of every sort (such as coopers, sawyers, and surgeons) in order for their community to survive in an unsettled area. If such skilled persons could not be found among the "godly," it was his duty to enlist them wherever they could be found. Thus it seems that even in England Winthrop was too practical a man to entertain the possibility of having a totally uniform orthodoxy in his "city on a hill." His desire was to build a commonwealth.<sup>14</sup>

An interesting point must be made here. Winthrop and his initial party of immigrants arrived in Massachusetts Bay in 1630. They had weathered a

rough transatlantic crossing. They worked to build some initial semblance of shelter and stability on the savage soil of New England. They experienced the rejection of their English suppliers when the Bay Company's initial hopes were quenched by the American reality. They experienced the "piercing cold" of the first winters, made the first contacts with the Indians, and expanded their territory into the frontier. In short, they started *de novo* in an attempt to produce a "civilized society." They did this for *three years* before any of the major Antinomian instigators - John Cotton, Anne Hutchinson, and John Wheelwright - ever set foot on the American continent. By the time these instigators arrived, the initial building blocks of society were already in place, and tight-knit communities had already been forged.<sup>15</sup>

The "Antinomian leaders" arrived in Massachusetts Bay Colony as it was experiencing a religious revival. During this religious awakening people very naturally felt assured of their salvation. By 1634, however, the revival had waned and the inhabitants once again began to struggle with personal doubts regarding the status of their souls. In the waning of the revival, two distinct positions regarding assurance came from the ranks of the Puritan clergy, and it is the conflict of these two positions which basically led to the Antinomian controversy.

## **B. The Opposing Viewpoints**

The position of the Puritan leadership basically asserted that in the absence of an immediate sense of God's presence, right actions are the surest sign that one has received justification from God and therefore assurance that one is saved. In their mind, a conscious effort to obey the Law of God will be a sure sign that the person's will has truly been transformed by the Holy Spirit. Two theological expositions of this view can be found in the writings of Peter Bulkeley and Thomas Shepard. Bulkeley's position is more philosophical, utilizing Aristotle's four classes of causes as means for arguing for the necessity of active response on the part of a believer. Shepard's perspective is more "existential," arguing that justified persons are those who take God's grace *seriously* and therefore are willing to "work out their salvation with fear and trembling."<sup>16</sup> In both cases, their underlying piety of obedience is consistent with that of the "Intellectual Fathers" which Janice Knight discerned in her research.

This view was opposed by the Antinomians, whose theological representatives were John Cotton and John Wheelwright. More akin to Janice Knight's "Spiritual Brethren," the Antinomians were much more mystical and evangelical in their piety and teaching. For both Cotton and Wheelwright, works of the law are absolutely no proof of one's justification. Using Philippians 3:12 as his text, Cotton argues that when an individual receives



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God's justification, it is an utterly passive reception. God is the only active agent and He acts directly on the soul, not through any intermediary. One must focus on Christ, not on good works, in order to be assured of their salvation. Thus good works are no proof that a person has been justified. In fact, John Wheelwright even went so far as to assert that the preaching of the Puritan leadership reeked of papist idolatry.<sup>17</sup>

Scholars such as Patricia Roberts-Miller have analyzed these differing viewpoints and have averred that it was the Antinomians themselves who remained true to the true Calvinist reformed faith by insisting on the primacy of grace in justification. It was the Puritan elders themselves who deviated from Reformed doctrine, according to Roberts-Miller, by teaching that natural human faculties can prepare one to receive the grace of God, and that external merits can offer proof of one's internal justification.<sup>18</sup>

William Stoever, on the other hand, has argued in his doctoral dissertation and in other publications that the controversy actually comes down to a deep theological discussion rooted in the relationship between nature and grace. He asserts that the Puritan elders actually held to a more traditional theological position by acknowledging the reality that God has ordained to work *through* nature to achieve His supernatural ends. Thus "works" – either of preparation or of evidence – are not necessarily "natural" in the sense that they are prideful human attempts to achieve salvation. Rather, they are the means by which God chooses to operate in assuring the salvation of the individual. (This relationship of nature and grace would lead the Puritan elders to naturally have a higher concept of the community and of the state, as the necessary natural means by which God chooses to regulate human affairs.)<sup>19</sup>

Likewise, Stoever has presented the Antinomians as the proponents of a near-Barthian understanding of reality: that God in His sovereign majesty acts directly on the human soul, that nature has no part in the process...in short, that "grace which is subject to empirical observation, as something belonging to the created order, is qualitatively different from grace which is dispensed immediately by the Holy Spirit in his own person." In other words, at the deepest theological levels, the Antinomians minimized God's use of the created order in the process of salvation. (Carrying this position to its political conclusions, it seems that the state would not be seen as having any inherently divine purpose. It is easy to see why the Puritan elders might find this theology offensive.)<sup>20</sup>

I accept Stoever's conclusions, to the extent that I do believe that the two opposing views in the Antinomian crisis can be viewed as two entirely



different understandings of the relationship between the natural and the supernatural realms and thus, basically two different metaphysical systems. I also accept that, carried to their logical conclusions, they provide radically opposing understandings of the role of the state in human affairs, specifically of the state in its relationship to spiritual issues. It is not Stoeever's *theological* analysis with which I am in conflict. My conflict is with his historical analysis that theology was the motivating factor in the actions taken by the Puritan leadership in that controversy.

I believe that Anne Hutchinson and John Wheelwright were denounced and exiled from the Massachusetts Bay Colony for primarily political reasons. Certainly their theology was offensive to the Puritan elders, and certainly *their* motivation for denouncing the elders was theological. It is also clear that the debates within the controversy were theological in nature, for theology (consciously or unconsciously) provided the basis for their entire sense of life. What I will attempt to prove in the next section, however, is that the nature of their own vision—combined with the nature of the American reality—forced them to think more pragmatically about basic issues of survival and human relations. I conclude from this that their ultimate actions against Hutchinson and other Antinomians were the result of a very practical need to preserve their community, its vision, and the stability that it provided in the New World.

## II. Historical Evidence for the Thesis

The purpose of the last section was to detail some of the important historical events leading up to the Antinomian Controversy, and to briefly present the personalities and viewpoints of the two opposing sides. In this section, three further pieces of evidence, found in the history of the Bay Colony, will be used to substantiate the thesis that the Antinomian Controversy was primarily driven by the practical concerns of organizational leadership and not by intensive theological debates.

### A. The Puritan Vision

One piece of evidence is the initial vision, or purpose, with which the Massachusetts Bay Colony was settled. As non-separating Congregationalists, their mission to America was not to break ties with the Church of England or with their homeland. Rather, their purpose was to *implement in reality* their notion of a proper social and ecclesiastical structure, based on the explicit teachings of Scripture. Their hope was that their brethren in England would see the success of their undertaking, realize it to be the true expression of God's laws for society, and then reform all of England according to their model. Winthrop

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himself, in his famous sermon *A Model of Christian Charity*, makes it clear that this project was not undertaken simply for its own sake, but because "the eyes of the world" would be watching to see their progress.<sup>21</sup> Individual Puritans may have had other reasons for migrating to the New World - concern for their own spiritual well-being, or for the lost souls of the American Natives, were two major reasons - but as far as the Puritan leadership was concerned, the dominant reason for the migration was the building of a Bible Commonwealth that would be seen and emulated by the rest of the Protestant world.<sup>22</sup>

As noted earlier, however, Winthrop had no illusions about the realities of such a quest. Humans are by nature totally depraved, and to expect that there would be no disorder in this "City on a Hill" would be an incredibly naïve expectation. But they also had no illusions about the realities that they would face in the New World, and this led Winthrop to insist that "wee must be knitt together in this worke as one man, wee must entertaine each other in brotherly Affeccion, wee must be willing to abridge our selves of our superfluities, for the supply of others necessities, wee must uphold a familiar Commerce together in all meekenes, gentlenes, patience, and liberallity."<sup>23</sup>

The Puritan vision was a corporate vision, from the ecclesiastical and the political perspective. (Indeed, these perspectives were not separate within "the New England Mind," but were intimately fused into one understanding of human relations.) Puritan leadership was realistic enough to accept that human sinfulness would exist even within their godly commonwealth. They were also tolerant of diversity in theological issues (This will be seen later in how the Puritan leadership dealt with John Cotton as opposed to other Antinomians). However, they could not tolerate radical individualists that disrupted the order of the community and thus curbed the implementation of their vision.

## **B. The American Reality**

A second, more telling piece of evidence is their actual encounter with the American reality. When one thinks of the contrast between seventeenth century Britain and seventeenth century America, one can only imagine the reactions of the Puritans when their boats landed at Massachusetts Bay. Peter N. Carroll notes that before the migrations, most Puritans had a very optimistic appraisal of what the New World had to offer...it was "good land." Their mental pictures may have been different, but they were all optimistic. By the time they actually arrived, however, their appraisals of the New World differed greatly: some described it favorably, almost viewing it as the Promised Land; some felt immediate displeasure and reported that it did not meet with their expectations.

Winthrop himself was optimistic, but his optimism was "tempered by a greater realism" – they would have to work and cultivate if they expected to truly benefit from the New World.<sup>24</sup>

Carroll specifically makes this assertion regarding the Puritans' initial response to the wilderness: "Their background provided scant preparation for the difficulties of settling the untamed continent, and only a painful process of trial and error enabled the Puritans to adjust to life in the wilderness." In transporting their "ideal" to a virgin continent, they would have to conform to the realities they encountered, even as they tried to bring those realities into conformity with their ideal.<sup>25</sup>

As early as 1631, the Puritans recognized the need to fortify themselves into united communities, for the purposes of protection from Indian raids, even though their initial relations with the Natives were friendly. In 1634, an Indian attack on two white sea-captains, plus their crew, started the chain reaction that would ultimately lead to the Pequot War in 1636-1638 (roughly the same time period as the Antinomian crisis). By 1636 the colony had already created a professional military establishment to deal with external attacks. Up until then attacks were almost nonexistent because the majority of the Native Tribes dealt peacefully with the Puritans, and the Puritans reciprocated their goodwill. The Pequots were different, however. They were a militant group that was determined to regain control of all northern Massachusetts.<sup>26</sup>

By 1638, the need for systematic defense and colonial unity was even more evident. Problems back in England left many to think that New England would be left without adequate aid from their mother country, and several Indian tribes began to show more hostility towards one another that might result in engagements on Puritan territory. Such problems understandably caused fear in the hearts of the colonists, and by 1643 the fears of Indian attacks became so paramount that an inter-colonial confederation was formed in order to provide for a "common defense." The Puritans' anxieties even prompted them to ask the heretic Roger Williams, who was ousted from Massachusetts Bay prior to Hutchinson, to join the confederation. This would seem to be a strong point in favor of the view that the Puritans were willing to cooperate with theological opponents when practical logic called for such measures.<sup>27</sup>

In addition, Peter Carroll notes that the year 1637 was a year of bad harvests for the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and at a time when Great Britain was holding back its supplies, such a bad harvest was probably a devastating thing in itself. Puritan historian Edward Johnson would later write of that year, "The Lord surrounded his chosen Israel with dangers deepe to make his miraculous deliverance famous...throughout the world."<sup>28</sup>

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It is clear that even without the Antinomian controversy, the years 1636-1638 would have tested the stability of the Puritans' City on a Hill, and they would have been forced to take desperate measures to preserve their own safety and the safety of their loved ones. Inserting the Antinomian controversy into this turbulent American reality makes it all the more understandable why the Puritan elders tried their hardest to quell the inner tension which was promulgated by the words and actions of Anne Hutchinson and her cohorts. It is especially understandable why they took offense, not just at her vocal proclamation of her theological disagreement, but at her vocal challenge of their leadership.

### C. The Outcome of the Controversy

One more aspect of the controversy need to be briefly brought out, which may even further prove that the Puritans were indeed motivated by the practical rather than the theological.

This aspect is the actual outcome of the controversy, following the trial of Anne Hutchinson. Hutchinson, the chief instigator and the most vocal proponent of the Antinomian creed, was ousted from the Massachusetts Bay Colony and viewed as satanic. John Cotton, who provided the theological rationale for the Antinomian creed (at least in America) was never ousted, and indeed, continued to be revered by the colony's leadership. Why?

Perhaps Cotton was not officially condemned because he actually had a hand in formulating the laws that governed the Bay Colony.<sup>29</sup> Perhaps his high status as a Puritan preacher exempted him from such harsh treatment. Or perhaps because he confined himself to theological issues, remained conspicuously neutral during the proceedings against Hutchinson, and ended up announcing the error of his ways, he was forgiven.<sup>30</sup>

Hutchinson, on the other hand, was not neutral, and she did not confine herself to mere theological discussions. She vocally and actively condemned any minister who did not espouse her views. She felt that their teachings *and their authority* ought to be rejected. The only two ministers that escaped her vociferous wrath were John Cotton and John Wheelwright. Thus, she made the Antinomian controversy into much more than a mere theological debate. For her, it was a challenge to what she viewed as apostate leadership.<sup>31</sup>

The fact that she was a woman also had a part to play. However, we must point out that the Puritans were not dark medieval misogynists—the writings of many Puritan men reflect a deep love for their women. Again, ultimately the Puritans were thinking “organizationally.” The cultural network



that they had established required that families be orderly and intact so that the society as a whole would be stable and orderly. (Even bachelors could not escape their cultural statutes, being required to live with another family.) The over-zealousness of Hutchinson was not necessarily a challenge to the masculinity of the Puritan elders. But as a woman, individually condemning Puritan leadership and modeling that for others, it is easy to see why she was viewed as a tremendous challenge to the stability and order of the society.<sup>32</sup>

The "straw that broke the camel's back," so to speak, was Hutchinson's claim to be the recipient of immediate revelations from the Holy Spirit. This she did in the presence of her "judges," and it precipitated a lengthy discussion on the nature of revelation itself. From the practical perspective, however, her claim basically intensified her self-perception (and her judges' perception of her) as an individualist who would set her own ideas above those of the community, and refuse to be held accountable.<sup>33</sup>

From a theological perspective, there was very little difference between Anne Hutchinson and John Cotton. Both would be considered "Spiritual Brethren," using the categories supplied earlier in this paper by historian Janice Knight. It was their actions against the community's leadership that was the decisive factor in determining their respective fates. Of the two, Cotton was the more "pragmatic," possessing more political savvy. He never directly opposed the community's leadership, and he never officially endorsed the woman who was at the heart of the controversy.

Hutchinson, on the other hand, openly asserted her attacks against the Puritan leadership, without regard for their position. She also apparently had little regard for the fact that these same leaders were in the midst of confronting bitter external conflict as well. She was attacking them, all the while living under the protection that their leadership afforded her.

Certainly a strong-willed woman, a woman of ideas and of ideals, it is my perspective that it was not her ideas that ultimately led to her rejection and expulsion. Rather, it was her strong-will, and the actions that resulted. Given the nature of these actions, Anne Hutchinson was too much of a threat to the stability and order of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Given the realities with which the Puritan leaders were dealing, her actions ultimately could not be reconciled with the vision that they were trying to implement.

### **III. Continuing Influences**

In assessing the relevance of the Antinomian controversy for the present time, I must first make a brief commentary regarding two aspects of American life that show the continuing influence of the Puritans.

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### A. American Pragmatism

First, a word must be said about the way in which the Puritans have indeed contributed to our "cultural core," as so many historians have credited them.

It seems to me that Americans have traditionally been viewed as a nation of fierce pragmatists, whose aim in life is to make a practical difference in the world, not to delve into the mysteries of existence and ferret out eternal, philosophical truths. Our goals have always been based on the "real world," and our heroes have always been those who make successes of themselves in this life: businessmen, politicians, athletes, and entertainers. We are not prone to esteem highly those whose ambition is more directed towards theoretical or eternal pursuits. Indeed, I concur with those philosophers who will tell you that America's one unique contribution to the "life of the mind" has been the philosophy of Pragmatism, championed by William James and John Dewey at the turn of the last century. The name of the philosophy says it all: pragmatism, a practical philosophy. Any theoretical ideas that Americans *have* used have generally been imported from Europe, and from what I can discern, there have been no *original* American theologians. (One could argue that Jonathan Edwards is an exception, but I think that is a gross exaggeration. His theological system is basically an attempt at fusing the concepts of two European thinkers: Calvin and Locke. Whitefield and Finney were both much more interested in the practical aspects of revival, and twentieth century American theologians like the Niebuhr brothers were basically disciples of Barth.)

This cultural phenomenon, I believe, can be traced back to the original Puritan elders, whose theoretical ideas were shaped by European thinkers, and who were themselves practical men with a very practical purpose of building a godly community. While many "free-thinking" Americans wish to see themselves as the heirs of Williams and Hutchinson, I believe we must concede that the Puritan elders themselves have influenced the way we do things here in America.

### B. The Dichotomy of American Politics

There is a second aspect of American life in which the influence of Puritanism may be discerned. This is in the dichotomous nature of American politics.

The political discourse of our country continues to be animated by very basic questions, and one of those is the relationship between the individual and

the community. How does one reconcile individual rights with community needs? How far should individual rights go? Even now, in a nation that is now more thoroughly secularized, should a person be free to espouse and proclaim any ideas, no matter how destructive they might be to that nation?

We need only go back fifty years in our nation's history to find a more recent example. At the height of the Cold War, was it justifiable for the American government to blacklist those individuals who held and promulgated radical leftist views, so close to the Communist views that we were trying actively to condemn? Or should their preaching of ideas that were (at their root) so contrary to the American system, be protected by that very system?

These are the kinds of questions that continue to inspire the political debate in our country. Liberals and conservatives, using very diverse methods and ideologies, have attempted to reconcile this seemingly-irreconcilable tension: the tension of the individual and the community. In reconciling this tension, we would do well to learn from our Puritan predecessors. We must be willing to bring opposing viewpoints into an open forum for deliberation, not merely on superficial jargon and rhetoric (which is essentially the extent of current political dialogue), but on fundamental issues. However, we must treat as traitorous any person's *statements or actions* which show an inherent hostility towards our nation's vision, institutions, and leadership.

In a very sad case of historical irony, the current trend in this country seems to be the very reverse. A person in public life is now excused from almost any statement or action – no matter how inherently evil or opposed to American ideals it may be – as long as that individual espouses the radical, ultraliberal worldview and agenda of this nation's "cultural elite."

### Concluding Reflections

As I conclude this paper, I look back at my career over the last twelve years. Six of those years were spent in a world of academics, first at Ashland University, and then at Ashland Theological Seminary. As a person with a passionate love of history—both sacred and secular—my major focus was on the theoretical, and my sense of life was shaped by a very unrealistic vision of the world, typical of bookworms. Had I endeavored to study the Antinomian controversy back then, I have no doubt that I would have sided with Anne Hutchinson the victim and proclaimed the "vicious evils" of the Puritan elders.

My last six years have been in full-time Christian leadership roles, and I find that these years have been more of an education than the first six. I am still a lover of history, now not necessarily for its own sake, but as it may potentially inform the present and future. I have learned to deal with the

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practical aspects of leadership, the ups and downs of ministry, and other harsh realities for which not even the greatest seminary or graduate school professor can prepare a person. My sense of life is now tempered by a much more realistic appraisal of people and situations. I think of the numerous conflicts that I have endured in my job: people whose actions, attitudes, and words were radically opposed to the vision that I was trying to implement. As the person in the leadership position, I have often found that the integrity of my vision for ministry would be jeopardized if my opponents were allowed free reign. Thus, I had to accept the hard burden of confronting those individuals, explaining their errors, and in some cases, removing them from their positions.

Perhaps these experiences have created in me an overt bias in favor of the Puritan leadership. I do recognize that their vision of a theocratic government was, in part, flawed. While one may believe that government is an institution ordained by God, one must also concede that, by its nature, government's purpose is secular: the maintenance of order and justice in human affairs. No radical theocracy can long endure the reality that human beings have minds which they will use freely, and they can not be forced to agree in matters of faith and conscience without the conscious (or unconscious) consent of the citizens.

The Puritans can not entirely be blamed for their error, however, as it was commonly held at that point in history. Every Christian denomination (with the possible exception of the Anabaptists, who influenced Williams) in some sense believed that government had a right, even an obligation, to endorse specific religious dogmas and to maintain an established church based on those dogmas.

Given this excusable historical error, I believe the Puritans did the best they could. I think John Winthrop, Thomas Shepard, and John Cotton were all good leaders with the tremendous courage and vision necessary to build a more thoroughly godly society in the untamed wilderness of the New World. Yet while visionary, they were also realistic, practical men who were able to deal with the harshness that confronted them in America. I know many "visionary" Christian leaders, yet I suspect many of them would shy away from such a harsh reality (and to be honest, I probably would as well). The fact that they did not shy away, but actively attempted to make their ideal a working reality, shows their commitment, their courage, and their faith.

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<sup>1</sup> See Richard B. Morris, *Fair Trial: fourteen who stood accused, from Anne Hutchinson to Alger Hiss*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952; Anne F. Withington and



Jack Schwartz, "The Political Trial of Anne Hutchinson," *The New England Quarterly* LI (1978) 226-240.

<sup>2</sup> See *The Antinomian Controversy, 1636-1638: A Documentary History*, David D. Hall, editor. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1968, pp. 3-23. William K. B. Stoever, "Nature, Grace, and John Cotton: The Theological Dimensions in the New England Antinomian Controversy," *Church History* XLIV, (1975), pp. 22-33. Jesper Rosenheimer, "New England's Perfection: The Image of Adam and the Image of Christ in the Antinomian Controversy, 1634-1638," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, XXVII (1970), pp. 435-459.

<sup>3</sup> Ben Barker-Benfield, "Anne Hutchinson and the Puritan Attitude Toward Women," *Feminist Studies*, Vol. I, No. 2. (Fall, 1972), pp. 65-92. Lyle Koehler, "The Case of the American Jezebels: Anne Hutchinson and Female Agitation during the years of the Antinomian Turmoil, 1638-1640," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, XXXVI (1974), pp. 55-78. Kai Erikson, *Wayward Puritans: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance*. New York: Wiley, 1968.

<sup>4</sup> Emery Battis, *Saints and Sectaries*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962. This perspective is the weakest, in my opinion. Battis errs in implying that a person's inner psyche is the *only* stimulus for making decisions and taking actions. This undermines the idea that the actual realities of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and the actual political situation therein, could have been motivating factors in the outworking of Hutchinson's case. This is what I am primarily arguing.

<sup>5</sup> I have taken Morgan's perspective primarily from two sources: *The Puritan Dilemma*, New York: Harper Collins, 1958; and "The Case Against Anne Hutchinson," *New England Quarterly* X (1937) 635-649.

<sup>6</sup> Leland Ryken, *Worldly Saints: The Puritans As They Really Were*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986, 7-16.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. John Winthrop saw Laud's appointment and Charles' dissolution of Parliament as signs of the "evill and declininge tymes" that foreshadowed "some heavy scourge and Judgment." See Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma*, 28-29.

<sup>8</sup> Janice Knight, *Orthodoxies in Massachusetts: Rereading American Puritanism*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995, 2-3. Knight specifically refers to the "Spiritual Brethren" as an "alternative community," emphasizing that this distinction is more than superficial.

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<sup>9</sup> Jerald C. Brauer, "Types of Puritan Piety," *Church History*, LVI, 1 (1987), pp. 39-58. Representing nomistic piety is Thomas Cartwright and Walter Travers. Evangelicalism: Tyndale, Preston, and Sibbes. Rationalism: John Milton and John Goodwin. Mysticism: Sir Francis Rous.

<sup>10</sup> Perry Miller, *Errand into the Wilderness*. Cambridge: Belknap, 1956, 1-3.

<sup>11</sup> See especially Peter N. Carroll, *Puritanism and the Wilderness: The Intellectual Significance of the American Frontier, 1629-1700*. NY and London: Columbia University Press, 1969, 8-14, 46-58. See also David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America*. NY and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989, 16-18, 50-57.

<sup>12</sup> Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, 50-57.

<sup>13</sup> Ronald D. Cohen, "Church and State in Seventeenth Century Massachusetts: Another look at the Antinomian Controversy," in *Journal of Church and State* XII, 1991, 478. See also Allen Carden, *Puritan Christianity in America: Religion and Life in Seventeenth Century Massachusetts*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990, 141-146.

<sup>14</sup> Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma*, 49-51.

<sup>15</sup> Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma*, 54-68; Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, 50-57; Carroll, *Puritanism and the Wilderness*, 52. See also Alden T. Vaughan, *New England Frontier, Puritans and Indians 1620-1675*. Boston & Toronto: Little, Brown & Co., 1965, 95-103. This may be speculation, but it seems to me that these initial three years are necessary to understanding why the Puritan leaders, especially Winthrop, held such a high view of the community: It was the only source of security in a harsh and unpredictable world. The ease with which Hutchinson defied the community could very well stem from the fact that she did *not* experience those three crucial years.

<sup>16</sup> "Peter Bulkeley and John Cotton: On Union with Christ" in Hall, ed., *The Antinomian Controversy*, 34-36. Thomas Shepard, *God's Plot: Puritan Spirituality in Thomas Shepard's Cambridge*, Michael McGiffert, ed. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1972, 3.

<sup>17</sup> "Letters between Thomas Shepard and John Cotton," in *The Antinomian Controversy*, 23-33.

<sup>18</sup> Patricia Roberts-Miller, *Voices in the Wilderness: Public Discourse and the Paradox of Puritan Rhetoric*. Tuscaloosa & London: University of Alabama Press, 1999, 13-14.

<sup>19</sup> William K. Stoever, "Nature, Grace, and John Cotton: The Theological Dimension in the New England Antinomian Controversy," in *Church History* XLIV (1975), 23-33.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. See especially pages 28-29.

<sup>21</sup> Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity," in *The Puritans: A Sourcebook of their Writings*, Perry Miller and Thomas Johnson, editors. New York: Harper & Row, 1938, 198-199.

<sup>22</sup> Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, 18. The concern for their own spiritual well-being stemmed from the perception of England as falling into moral and spiritual degeneracy. Very few Puritans showed and direct concern for the American Natives, although John Eliot and Thomas Shepard are notable exceptions (See Vaughan, *New England Frontier*.).

<sup>23</sup> Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity."

<sup>24</sup> Carroll, *Puritanism and the Wilderness*, 8, 46-52. The optimists included Francis Higginson, Thomas Graves, and Thomas Morton, who specifically referred to New England as "a land that flowes with Milke and Hony" (p. 50). The pessimists included Anne Bradstreet, Edward Johnson, and William Wood. So from the beginning, even their views on the reality of the situation were more diverse than we are often led to believe.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p. 52-58. In my opinion, this is where most historians err in their assessment of the Puritans: they assume that the pure Puritan vision was the only factor in their decision-making process, and that actual reality made no difference.

<sup>26</sup> Vaughan, *New England Frontier*, 123-135. Vaughan makes it clear that the Pequot War was not a racial war: the Puritans were trying to protect their community from hostile natives. Their motivation was *not* the suppression of Indians, but the salvation of their own community.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 155-172.

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<sup>28</sup> Carroll, 70-71, 151.

<sup>29</sup> Louis B. Wright, *The Atlantic Frontier: Colonial American Civilization*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1947, 199. Cotton utilized the OT almost exclusively (especially Leviticus) in his formulation of a legal code for Massachusetts Bay. This focus solely on Scripture was too much for the Puritan leaders, so Nathaniel Ward was later looked to for legal guidance. Interestingly, Ward's legal scheme was based on Magna Carta and Edward Coke as well as the OT—and these non-Scriptural authorities would have had more to say about limiting government's authority.

<sup>30</sup> Kai T. Erikson, *Wayward Puritans*, 90-91.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 78-79.

<sup>32</sup> Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, 73-75.

<sup>33</sup> Hall, ed., *The Antinomian Controversy*, 336-337.



## **Competency, Spirituality, and Core-Identity in Pastors**

Richard Parrott\*

*I am deeply convinced that the Christian leader of the future  
is called to be completely irrelevant and to stand in this world with nothing to  
offer but his or her own vulnerable self."*

Henri Nouwen

The academic pursuit of leadership produces knowledge. Personal and spiritual experience cultivates wisdom. This paper combines both. I have taught and guided 78 pastors the process of producing a personal plan of competency development. Moreover, I have faced and continue to face personal challenges as the executive director of a leadership center. This paper is a reflection on the spiritual needs of pastors who are developing as leaders.

Pastors require spiritual help when developing effective leadership competencies. The spiritual challenge for pastors is to minister out of authenticity. Competent spiritual leaders minister out of a core-identity in Christ. For pastors, effective self-learning is grounded in spiritual practices and resources. The spiritual practice of the desert fathers and mothers is a powerful resource that can lead to authentic core-identity

### **The Spiritual Challenge – To Minister Out of Authenticity**

In the past 3 years, my colleague, Terry Wardle, and I have conducted in-depth assessments of 47 pastors. These pastors demonstrate a hunger for deeper spirituality and a desire to depend upon spiritual resources. They want to live authentically in Christ. But these pastors also want to be effective in ministry. They desire to make a difference in the lives of others, the community of faith, and society as a whole.

The pastors demonstrate a tendency to exchange personal authenticity for ministry effectiveness. They tie self-identity to people pleasing and performance based self-assessment. Such behavior is dysfunctional for the spiritual leader. It thwarts spiritual hunger and distances spiritual resources. It

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displaces the motive for ministry from genuineness to success.

I am conducting a study of 68 pastors deemed excellent by their peers. They report their greatest fear in ministry is being “irrelevant.” They fear that they “will not make a difference,” “the changes won’t last,” “church is out of touch,” “I will not finish well,” “be rejected,” “people will go back into old patterns” or “fall out of the will of God.” To appear “irrelevant” seems to be a primary test of spiritual leadership. Scott Rodin calls this the challenge to be a “leader of no reputation” (Rodin, 2002).

To become a leader of no reputation is the first step in overcoming leadership gaps. This is a difficult and spiritual moment. I find the spiritual process demands setting aside the desire for effectiveness in ministry in quest of authenticity in Christ. It is choosing authenticity as a pre-requisite for effectiveness. In simple heart language, I choose to be real and deal with my warts rather than put on a front and pretend I am successful.

### **Effective Competency – The Expression of Authenticity**

The competency movement was launched in 1973 when David McClelland published a paper, “Testing for Competency Rather than Intelligence” (McClelland, 1973). Competency is an *underlying characteristic* that predicts behavior (Spencer and Spencer, 93, page 9). These characteristics indicate “ways of behaving or thinking, generalizing across situations, and enduring for a reasonably long period of time” (Guion, 1991).

The study of competency and the church has been advanced by Father David Nygren and sister Mariam Ukeritis and also the work of D. Martin Butler and Robert D. Herman. Nygren and Ukeritis conclude that exceptional leaders of faith communities are:

“...grounded in faith, able to acknowledge the centrality of God in their lives. They have a high need to achieve personally and have a clear sense of the impact the congregation could have. They are characterized by objectivity and compassion. With all these attributes, the outstanding leaders do not have a strong need to belong to the very groups they are attempting to lead, yet they find meaning precisely in that context of faith, membership and impact. The outstanding leader has a clear vision of the future and successfully employs the means to both gain the support of the congregation for the direction and to implement the decisions of the group” (Nygren and Ukeritis, 1999)

The exceptional minister of a congregation exhibits patterns of behavior that are distinct from mediocre ministers (Butler and Herman, 1999). The behaviors of exceptional minister are as follows:

- The exceptional minister checks work progress against plans to see if it works.
- The exceptional minister handles church-related problems and crises in a confident and decisive manner
- The exceptional minister plans in detail how to accomplish a task or project.
- The exceptional minister presents a policy or strategy in general terms and then asks you to determine specific action steps for implementing it.
- The exceptional minister develops enthusiasm for a task or project by appealing to your pride in accomplishing a challenging task or doing something never done before.
- The exceptional minister has been able to help this church adapt to changing conditions.
- The exceptional minister shows that s/he really cares about people.
- The exceptional minister uses a style of leadership that is flexible and responsible.
- The exceptional minister demonstrates a style of lifelong learning through continual education, research, and study.
- The exceptional minister does not frighten people with his/her dominating superior attitude.
- The exceptional minister's lifestyle does not involve illicit sexual activity and/or gambling.

The pastors I have worked with hastily grasp at competency theory as a means of producing effectiveness. Yet a plan of imitating exceptional ministers is a tempting but false invitation to greatness. Furthermore, this shallow interpretation of competency theory plays into the pastors' dysfunctional behaviors of people pleasing and performance-based identity.

For pastors with a hunger for spirituality and a desire to depend upon spiritual resources, the results are empty and demanding. These pastors need a bridge from social-science theory to spiritual experience. They yearn to understand the inner processes of change and leadership development.

Competency is founded in a person's underlying characteristics and core identity. True competency is an expression of authenticity.

For spiritual leaders, core identity is the foundation. For the Christian minister, core-identity is in Christ. This core-identity influences the inner characteristics which are expressed through calling in predictable patterns of thinking and behaving. In my work with pastors and other spiritual leaders, I teach that inward competency is expressed outwardly in *"a pattern of effective behavior that flows out of core identity, character and calling, enabling you to fulfill your role with excellence by meeting the needs of the present situation to the glory of Christ and for the good of others."*<sup>1</sup>

### **Christian Spirituality – The Path of Core-identity**

Internal change begins with core identity which impacts characteristics and calling. "We don't change because it is a good idea; we change because we are in love or in crisis" (Quinn, Seminar notes, 1999). New love and new loss challenge identity. Embracing change is a self-identity issue.

Leadership literature introduces self-identity as answering the question, "Who am I?" (Gollwitzer and Kirchhof, 1998). Schein posits the leader's identity as "the relatively stable and enduring constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role" (Schein, 1978). The motive to develop or alter self identity has been attributed to fear of death (Greenberg, Pyszczynski, and Solomon, 1986), the fear of social exclusion (Baumeister and Tice, 1990), the need for self-completion (Gollwitzer and Wicklund, 1985) or the pervasive need to see oneself in a positive light (Greenwald, 1980).

Fear, overt or covert, drives the need for self identity. Fear driven self-identity is enacted in the lives of the pastors I have interviewed. The pastors reported being fear driven in the need for acceptance and accomplishment. They give evidence to experiences when they forfeited authentic self-identity to present a more effective career-identity (for this phenomenon in a secular setting, see Baumeister, 1982).

Leadership theories are predisposed to anchor self-identity in career performance. Strong career identity, a hallmark in career motivation theory (London, 1983; London and Noe, 1997), is *"to define oneself by work"*. It consists of job, organizational, and professional involvement, as well as the needs for advancement, recognition, and being a leader. Viewing oneself as a leader is one form of career identity" (London, 2002, *italics mine*).



Pastors need a deeper foundation than career identity or self identity. My colleague, Terry Wardle, uses the term "core-identity" (Wardle, 2000). Self-identity refers to "how individuals view themselves in relationship to others" (London, 2002). Christian core-identity is who I am in relationship to Christ.

The pastors I have worked with need and respond to core identity centered in Christ. The basis of core identity is not performance but position. It is not fear driven but secured in the experience of Divine love. It is the spiritual pattern of change found in the desert fathers and mothers of the second and third centuries. It is a way of change that descends before it ascends (Ephesians 4:9). The way of the desert is a step down to authenticity.

Anselm Gruen, O.S.B. is a Benedictine monk of the abbey of Muensterschwarzach in Germany. He regularly offers workshops for European executives and professionals on the wisdom of the desert fathers and mothers. His approach is to help leaders resist the temptation to climb the heights of effectiveness. Rather, he teaches the way of the desert where one enters spirituality from below:

"The desert fathers teach us a spirituality from below. They show us that we have to begin with ourselves and our passions. The way to God, for the desert fathers, always passes through self-knowledge. Evagrius Ponticus puts it this way: 'If you want to know God, learn to know yourself first.' Without self-knowledge we are always in danger of having our ideas of God turn into mere projections. There are pious individuals who take flight from their own reality into religion. They aren't transformed by their prayer and piety; they simply use it to lift themselves over others, to confirm their own infallibility.

In the desert fathers we meet an entirely different from of piety. The goals here are, above all, sincerity and authenticity." (Gruen, 1999)

This is the spirituality of a "leader of no reputation" (Rodin, 2002). This is the path of leadership that leaves nothing to offer but the vulnerability of an authentic self in Christ (Nouwen, 1996). To define self out of authentic relationship in Christ rather than relative effectiveness with others is the spiritual foundation for developing competency.

To experience core identity "in Christ" (Paul's oft used phrase) is to follow the spiritual path of Christ (Philippians 2:5-8). My own expression of the journey is to move from "hut" to "wilderness" to "mountain." The *hut* is the

inward positioning of the soul in anticipation of experiencing the presence of Christ. Father Moses instructed a young recruit, "Out, go to your *kellion* (hut), and sit down, and the *kellion* will teach you everything." The hut is the place where I rediscover in fresh experience the love of Christ for me and the power of Christ in me. It is not theological presuppositions, but inward experience that transforms.

The movement from hut to *wilderness* produces anxiety. It is the experience of self-insight. Inward work is re-examining story, wounds, strength, motives, and traits. The desert fathers called this "fighting the demons." The fathers and mothers of the desert did not believe battling demons was a personal endeavor. The monk fought demons on behalf of society (see Jesus in the Desert, Matthew 4:1-11). A minister encounters his or her personal demons on behalf of the congregation. What a leader gleans from this battle will be precisely what the congregation needs.

The journey leads to the *mountain*. The scriptures often identify a mountain as a place of calling (see Exodus 33:12-23; Matthew 5:1-12). Calling is partnership with God. It is establishing and reaffirming your relationship with the purpose of God in the world. Calling is fulfilled in many roles and places.

The spiritual work done in the "*hut*," the "*wilderness*," and the "*mountain*," bears fruit in patterns of effective behavior. The patterns are effective precisely because they are authentic.

### **Self-directed Learning – The Need for Spiritual Empowerment**

Authenticity must be translated into effective behavior. Richard Boyatzis, during three decades of work in leadership development, outlines the process of self-directed learning (Boyatzis, 1994). The process involves five discoveries: 1) Who I want to be, 2) what are my strengths and gaps, 3) my learning agenda, 4) experimenting with new and practicing new behavior, thoughts and feelings to the point of mastery, and 5) developing supportive and trusting relationships that make change possible.

I learned this process by team teaching a Doctor of Ministry class with Dr. Lisa Berlinger in the spring of 1999. Since then, I have helped 78 pastors and 54 community leaders develop self-learning plans. I have learned that the pastors I work with need a clear spiritual emphasis as they develop learning plans. I accomplish this in three ways:

First, *root the plan in a personal quest for authenticity*. Writing a plan is a lesson in strategic thinking. I ground learning plans in a clear articulation of

personal call and core values. Revisiting the "call story" and discovering core values anchors the plan for behavioral change in a quest for authenticity.

Second, *encourage empowerment through the Holy Spirit*. The learning plan explicitly names and utilizes spiritual resources. Pastors welcome and need this emphasis. I encourage action steps that include spiritual disciplines and exercises, especially prayer.

Third, *depend on "moments of grace."* This is a simple exercise that increases spiritual confidence, motivation, and transformation. Look for moments when the inward movement of Christ's Spirit confirms the process of transformation. Moments of grace include those inward assurances that evoke the response, "I'm needed," or "I'm changing," or "I'm effective" or "I'm authentic." These are moments to be celebrated and remembered.

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to acknowledge the insights of Terry Wardle in the development of this definition.



**C. S. Lewis on "Christian Apologetics"**

By Mark Hamilton\*

In 1945 C.S. Lewis delivered a speech to a group of Anglican Church pastors and youth leaders in Wales on the topic of Christian Apologetics and this lecture is printed in *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*, edited by Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970) 89-103 under the title of "Christian Apologetics." Many of the points Lewis makes in his lecture to this audience are quite timeless. Church leaders and pastors who work on the frontlines of Christian ministry today would be wise to heed his directives for practical apologetics.

Lewis begins by telling them that they must know what it is that is being defended, and that clear boundary lines must be drawn as to what is within the definition of Christian doctrine defined as "the faith preached by the Apostles, attested by the Martyrs, embodied in the Creeds, expounded by the Fathers" (90). Without boundaries it would be impossible to defend the Faith for no one would know what they are defending. Apologists should make a clear distinction between this historical faith and their own opinions. One must even face up to those doctrines that one is uncomfortable with because it is not about what we like but about what is true (Lewis himself disliked the doctrine of eternal hell, but considered it to be a part of Christian truth). The modern audience must be convinced that the apologist is defending Christianity not because it is liked or good, but rather because it is objective fact, because it is true (91). This has radical implications for our postmodern relativistic age that rejects all claims to truth.

In the Apologist's private studying, Lewis believes there are two areas to keep up on: the "recent movements in theology," and whether there is influence by all the "winds of doctrine" (91). Lewis is greatly concerned that the contemporary church not be compromised by these new theological movements. The Apologist studies and reviews the standard of permanent Christianity through reading "old books", assuming these to be Christian classics, so he might possess the tools to recognize and confront the error of the new theological trends. This is so the apologist is not stirred by the winds of fashion and keeps clear the "standard by which we must test all contemporary thought" (92). What are those new recent movements in theology and how are we challenging them? Do we understand the traditional faith well enough to defend it and to distinguish it from those recent movements as they arise?

People are under attack in subtle ways through the modern cultural ideas being presented to them, so Lewis issues a warning that the great danger is the enemy's line of communication. He writes, "It is not the books written in direct defense of Materialism which make the modern man a materialist; it is the materialistic assumptions in all the other books" (93). If a person is saturated in the writings of those who make subtle challenges to Christianity and does so unaware, then one will find one's ideas shifting

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away from Christianity. This line must be blocked, and to do this Lewis believes we need "not more little books about Christianity, but more little books by Christians on other—subjects with their Christianity latent" (93). This is certainly happening, but not at a fast enough or qualitatively adequate pace. Lewis believes that the first step to the re-conversion of his Wales was "a series, produced by Christians, which can beat the *Penguin* and *Thinkers Library* on their own ground" (93).

Lewis instructs the Welsh church leaders to recognize that their country is a mission field itself. The goal should no longer exclusively be to edify believers, but now to convert the uninitiated. And just as a missionary being sent to Africa or China must learn the language and culture, Lewis says they need to understand the language and habits of their "own uneducated and unbelieving fellow countrymen" (94). This rings true for the contemporary American clergy as well, who must learn the thinking of the twenty-first century non-Christian in order to communicate the gospel.

Lewis then expounds on four observations about his fellow Englishmen that he wanted the Welsh clergy to sift through to see if they apply to their context. First was skepticism about History. Lewis is surprised that many disbelieve not due the claims of the miraculous but due to their doubt about History, especially about events happening two thousand years ago. They are more likely to accept science than history or to believe "the Pre-historic more than the Historic" (95). So the Bible which falls into the realm of history is harder to believe in than stories of dinosaurs because science has more credibility than history. This is quite relevant today because for many, science has become their religion.

Second is "a distrust of ancient texts." Since we do not have the original documents, errors in copying over time must occur (95). Lewis believes one can point in the direction of science and textual criticism to support the accuracy of the materials. This, however, will not persuade the person who does not want to believe. The issues of text are still crucial today and a good apologist must particularly know how to answer those who question the authority of the Bible on these grounds.

The third observation Lewis makes is that "a sense of sin is almost totally lacking" (95). When the gospel first went forth, it went to people who understood a sense of guilt and were ready for "good news." "We address people who have been trained to believe that whatever goes wrong in the world is someone else's fault—the Capitalists', the Government's, the Nazis', the Generals', They approach God Himself as His judges. They want to know, not whether they can be acquitted for sin, but whether He can be acquitted for creating such a world" (95). The problem becomes how to make people aware of personal sin. This is truer today than in the day of Lewis as Western culture has become more and more post Christian. American society is quick to recognize social sins but very slow to react to personal sin. People are quick to blame others or make excuses rather than to accept personal responsibility. In approaching this insensitivity to sin, Lewis warns that it is useless to direct attention to sins "they do not commit" or ones "they do, but do not regard as sins." His examples are that they are usually not drunkards but are fornicators, but they do not regard fornication to be sin (96). To awaken the sense of sin, Lewis recommends beginning "from the sin that has been one's own chief



problem during the last week; one is very often surprised at the way this shaft goes home" (96). By whatever method necessary, it is important to "get their mind away from public 'affairs' and 'crime' and bring them down to brass tacks—to the whole network of spite, greed, envy, unfairness and conceit in the lives of 'ordinary decent people' like themselves (and ourselves)" (96).

Fourth, it is essential to understand the audience's language to make certain that preacher and listener are speaking the same language and truly communicating. Lewis provides a list of eighteen terms where he sees a gap between what the ministers mean and how it is being perceived in the ears of the congregation. One example is the term 'Church' which means 'sacred building' or 'clergy to the listener and not 'God's people'. Some others he mentions are Catholic, creative, dogma, or primitive. Today a speaker may describe God as a person and the hearer may hear him saying that God is a human being, not that God is self-conscious. The good communicator continues to examine language usage, especially the use of religious jargon. Theology must be translated into the vernacular. States Lewis, "If you cannot translate your thoughts into uneducated language, then your thoughts were confused" (98).

In the final few pages of this speech, Lewis provides a number of clear directives to the apologist-clergyman. He suggests that the method of intellectual attack is best if accompanied by one who provides an emotional appeal with him. He describes the ideal missionary team as consisting of one who argues and one who preaches. "Put up your arguer first to undermine their intellectual prejudices; then let the evangelist proper launch his appeal" (99).

Do not water down Christianity by leaving out the supernatural. Miracles are essential to Christianity. Help the audience to understand that people in the ancient world knew the laws of nature and were not naïve about miracles as exceptions to those laws. Lewis does not see that there are many true atheists, so the question of God's existence is secondary to the question of the divinity of Jesus. "The Lord's own words and claims (of which many are quite ignorant) must be forced home" (101). The historicity of the Gospels also must be part of the focus. Clearly the Gospels are presented as history and not as legend.

Lewis instructs them to keep the question of Truth at the forefront. "They always think you are recommending Christianity not because it is true but because it is good" (101). Do not allow them to think that one can believe Christianity to be "moderately important." "Christianity is a statement which, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance" (101). Lewis does muddle the point a bit when in attempting to write to the public's rejection of salvific exclusivism in Article 23 in the Prayer Book when he says, "of course it should be pointed out that though all salvation is through Jesus, we need not conclude that He cannot save those who have not explicitly accepted Him in this life" (102). And toward religious pluralism, Lewis states, "And it should be made clear that we are not pronouncing all other religions to be totally false, but rather saying that in Christ whatever is true in all religions is consummated and perfected" (102).

In the final section Lewis argues that Christianity is the superior religion because it is the only one that is both Clear and Thick. "By Thick I mean those which

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have...mysteries and local attachments: Africa is full of Thick religions. By Clear I mean those which are philosophical, ethical and universalizing: Stoicism, Buddhism" are examples (102). It perfectly combines the mysterious with the ethical to create what Otto calls "The Holy." In conclusion Lewis warns of the danger of becoming sidetracked when doing the work of the defender of the faith. One must regularly fall back "from Christian apologetics into Christ Himself" (103).

The good apologist is one who presents the timeless in the common vernacular of the age. The apologist is to teach what is timeless but to wear a "modern dress." "The bad preacher does the opposite: he takes the ideas of our own age and tricks them out in the traditional language of Christianity" (93). With the explosion of literature in the field of Christian apologetics there arises a need to reflect back on the works of those who set the standard for apologetics. In this article, "Christian Apologetics," Lewis gives clear and relevant directions to Church leaders, and those who want to impact their culture for Christ today would be well advised to reflect on the advice given by Lewis.

**American Religion:  
A review Article of the Series Religion in American Life**

By Luke L. Keefer, Jr.\*

Edwin S. Gaustad, *Church and State in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. 157 pages.

Hasia R. Diner, *Jesus in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. 158 pages.

Albert J. Raboteau, *African-American Religion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. 142 pages.

Claudia Lauper Bushman and Richard Lyman Bushman, *Mormons in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. 142 pages.

The four books are part of a 17 volume set on Religion in American Life edited by Yale University religious historians Jon Butler and Harry S. Stout. All these books are surveys of various strands of American religious history from 1500 to the present. The editors share the conviction that it is impossible to understand American society, its politics and its culture, without understanding the central role religion - in all its diversity - has played in the development of the United States (see preface in each volume).

Three books in this series have previously been reviewed in the *Ashland Theological Journal*. In the 2001 journal Dr. Dale Stoffer reviewed Jon Butler's *Religion in Colonial America* (pp. 143-144) and Stephan J. Stein's *Alternative American Religions* (pp. 155-156). The following year Dr. JoAnn Watson reviewed Ann Braude's *Women and American Religion* (pp. 153-154). The series includes two more period histories: *Religion in Nineteenth Century America* by Grant Wacker and *Religion in Twentieth Century America* by Randall Balmer. Volumes on particular religious groups include: Gurinder Singh Mann, Paul David Numrich and Raymond B. William's *Buddhists, Hindus and*

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*Sikhs in America*; James T. Fisher's *Catholics in America*; Fredrick Denny's *Muslims in America*; John H. Erickson's *Orthodox Christians in America*; Mark Noll's *Protestants in America*; and Joel W. Martin's *Native American Religion*. Rounding out the set are *Immigration and American Religion* by Jenna Weissman Joselit and *A Biographical Supplement and Series Index* prepared by Darryl Hart and Ann Henderson Hart.

All the books are superbly written and edited. The content, through uniformly kept to about 150 pages, is excellent in academic import, clearly organized according to chronological periods, insightful in raising crucial themes and questions, and kept interesting through stories and pictures. They are most serviceable to those who seek their first introduction to the subjects involved, but even those who are relatively well informed will find much to expand their understanding. All the volumes are published in hard bound colorful covers, which if displayed properly, would pique the interest of the casual reader. All North American libraries ought to contain the set, but it also would be an appropriate source in homes, pastors' studies, and church libraries.

In *Church and State in America*, readers profit from the long career of Edwin Gaustad's teaching and writing on American Religious history. He demonstrates throughout the tension between the avowed civil philosophy of the "separation of church and state" and the actual interweaving of the two in the hearts and minds of many citizens of the United States. And, contrary to appearances, the recent era shows no abatement of the dilemma. He notes, "Indeed, there have been more cases interpreting the First Amendment in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century than in all earlier periods of American History combined" (p. 7).

Since the subject is so broad, Gaustad choose to limit the scope by using Supreme Court cases throughout American history as a way to illustrate the issues of Church and State. After two chapters on the European background to and the American experiment in representative democracy, he launches reviews of the Supreme Court cases in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Among the interesting cases from the 1800's were the ones involving colleges founded by churches and the issue of polygamy among the Mormons. With the disestablishment of the churches in New England, some argued that a consistent application of the law would force all church-supported colleges to be turned over to state control. In *Dartmouth College v. Woodward* (1819), Daniel Webster-an alumnus of Dartmouth - took the case to the Supreme Court and won. Colleges founded and supported by churches would not come under state ownership and control (pp. 53-54). The crucial issue in polygamy was whether



an individual could claim religious exemption from civil codes of behavior (the US Congress had outlawed polygamy in all states and territories in 1862). The court ruled that while the First Amendment did not allow government to regulate belief, it could punish those who broke the laws governing public behavior. Otherwise, every citizen would "become a law unto himself" (p.61).

Gaustad's case examples from the 20<sup>th</sup> century are quite interesting - religious tests for federal officials, conscientious objector to war status for atheists, municipal display of Christmas nativity scenes, and the tax-exempt status of churches. More interesting, however, are his observations of the changes in American society that have prompted numerous court cases based upon First Amendment issues (pp. 65-66). He mentions two truisms in passing. First, "When the decisions of the nine justices fail to be unanimous, it is a good guess that the American public has also had trouble reaching a consensus" (p. 66). And, second, "Five-to-four decisions are notoriously slippery; that is, they do not establish solid precedents upon which to build" (p. 75). He notes that many such split decisions get overturned by later Courts, when either the Court composition or the public opinion changes.

Many readers would be highly interested in the cases in chapters 5-7 regarding public and private schools and the limits of religious toleration before the law. Many issues are of contemporary interest: religious instruction in school (the Court says no for grades K-12 but is less concerned about college students), the teaching of evolution, school prayer, government money for private schools, the Jehovah Witnesses' ban against blood transfusions, Amish resistance to high school education, and the use of peyote in religious ritual among some Native American tribes, to name a few examples.

Gaustad concludes by predicting that Church/State tensions will occupy the Supreme Court and the American public far into the future. "However," he states, "the road would be far bumpier - as it is over so much of the rest of the world - if the resort to law were replaced by a resort to arms" (p.148).

*Jews in American* by Hasia Diner is as fine an introduction as one can find on the subject. She has an excellent grasp of the various historical periods from 1650's to the present, with the possible exception of the colonial era, where her expertise is not as vast. Yet, even here, the treatment is adequate, and, it must be admitted the historical sources are not as plentiful as they are for subsequent periods. She makes up for this by making connections with the Jewish experience in Europe, so the reader can understand the situation Jews faced in the new world.

She does excel in the social history of the Jewish people in America and makes the important connections between that history and the religious

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developments in the Jewish community. She is strong in the subject of immigration, when it occurred, points of origin in the old world, places of settlement in America, and what Jews brought with them in religious and cultural perspectives. She makes the important point that, while Jewish people were not part of the American mainstream until after WW II, they still felt things in America were better than any other country on earth.

That is an amazing declaration given the difficult history many Jews experienced in America. The first group of 23 Jews who landed in the Dutch City of New Amsterdam (now New York City) in 1654 were pointedly informed by Peter Stuyvesant and an official of the Dutch Reformed Church that they were not welcomed there (pp. 14-15). They fared no better in Puritan New England, where they were forbidden to live in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century and were accused by the Puritan pulpit of the guilt of Christ's blood (p. 22). They would find through the centuries restrictions to college education and admission to the professions. They occasionally suffered mob violence, even lynching (pp. 76-77), and threats from the KKK and other anti-Semitic groups. More difficult, perhaps, has been the insinuations of people like Henry Ford in his publication of the forgery known as "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" (p.89), for such charges make hate and suspicion respectable.

In general, she traces the developments of the Jewish mind toward American society from isolation, to the desire for acceptance, and ultimately to acculturation within the social mainstream. What is gained in cultural acceptance, however, comes with a price. Religious life becomes either more difficult or more attenuated, best seen perhaps in recent statistics on intermarriage with non-Jews (estimates vary between 35-50 % of all present Jews who marry in America - p. 138). The tension of accommodation to American culture has given rise to branches in Judaism, such as Conservative Judaism, Reform Judaism, and Reconstructuralist Judaism, each moving further from Orthodox Judaism.

The book gives good insights into Jewish stances on politics. During the Civil War they sided with Lincoln and the Republicans because of their abhorrence of slavery, rooted in Old Testament history. In the twentieth century they have been predominately Democratic due to their support for labor unions and other social causes, especially on measures to overcome racism. Here the author deals with a delicate and painful topic, and one senses the anguish of the Jewish community concerning it. During the civil rights movements of the 1960's the Jews in America were strong supporters of the Martin Luther King, Jr. and participated in marches, demonstrations, and legal efforts to end

discrimination. But more recently, events in Israel have led to outspoken criticism of Jewish treatment of Arabs by several African-American spokesmen. The passionate invective by Louis Farrakhan is particularly irksome. To be switched from the category of "partner" to "the enemy" by leading voices in the black community is both hurtful and fearful. It raises the specter of the past when passionate negative rhetoric was generally the doorway to violence against Jews.

Both the internal tensions of acculturation and the external threats of anti-Semitism have led to Jewish responses in recent decades to clarify their identity and stability. Diner notes renewed emphasis upon Jewish education for children and youth and the decisions of rabbis to encourage gentile marriage partners to convert to Judaism. There is a felt need for the Ante-Defamation League, and some even support the Jewish Defense League. Since the 1960's Jews have become interested in Holocaust studies and supported the establishment of Holocaust museums that might help to better educate the public. There is a strong sentiment of Zionism, which many outsiders do not understand. Israel is a psychological and religious necessity, for Jews are determined to never again be in a situation where they can not count on a country for refuge in a time of extreme political distress.

Professor Diner's account is kept colorful through judicious illustrations and stories. Two stand out in particular. First, she includes George Washington's letter to the leaders of the Newport, R.I. synagogue in 1790 (pp. 28-25). With obvious goodwill to the Jews of this new republic, and with high (exaggerated?) regard for the import of the Constitution, he wrote in part:

It is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it was by the indulgence of one clan of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily the government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, inquiring it on all occasions their effectual support.

If only it were this easy, surely subsequent history would be different!

Then, she tells the story of Emma Lazarus and her connection to the Statue of Liberty (pp. 51-52). She was the winner of the poetry contest sponsored as a way to help pay for the pedestal of "Miss Liberty." She died before the statue was unveiled, and it was twenty years before her poem was placed inside the pedestal, and another thirty years until it was fastened outside the pedestal where all can now read her famous lines:

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Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to break free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

These lines are appropriate for Jews who found something of a haven of sanctuary in the United States, but ironic in that both Jews and other minorities know how elusive this promise is.

There is no question that Dr. Diner identified positively with her people, their problems, and their accomplishments. However, she does so with appropriate scholarly objectivity. Her personal perspective adds human warmth to the story without detracting from its historical credibility.

It is easy to be effusive about Albert J. Raboteau's *African-American Religion*. For he too, gives his account with passion and conviction, while he lets the facts speak for themselves. Again, if one wants one good introduction to the subject, it would be difficult to find a better source than this volume.

I would highlight several strengths of the book. First his chronological periods help one determine the key points of development in African American history and religion: the colonial period and the origin of African slavery in the United States, the promise of the Revolutionary War and the disappointment of the Constitution, repressed but growing Christianity among blacks in the antebellum period, the freedom gained by the Civil War and its subsequent losses in the reconstruction era, the northern migration of African-Americans in the 1920s, the Civil Rights campaign and its advancements in rights and identities, and the diverse scene in the present period.

To this skeleton of history one can connect the flesh of the emerging black religious experience. At first, slaves worshipped in white churches where they were second-class participants. While free blacks were establishing independent African-American churches in the North, slave worship had to be mostly in secret in the South. Following the Civil War black denominations began to thrive also in the South, and with the exception of the Pentecostal Churches, the major black denominations all were flourishing before the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Large urban churches were the result of the migrations North and West, with extensive programs to minister to physical needs as well as spiritual ones. He concludes that the African-American churches are still vital to the black community, but the religious scene today is more diverse than it was in the past (pp. 131-132).



A second strength of the book is the large list of people who have figured prominently in various stages of these religious and social developments. Just as few of the major players include names like Andrew Bryan, Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, Henry Highland Garnet, Lott Carey, Jarena Lee, Harriet Tubman, W.E.B. DuBois, Sojourner Truth, Henry McNeal Turner, Daniel Alexander Payne, Ida B. Wells, Marcus Garvey, William J. Seymour, Charles H. Mason, Father Divine, Howard Thurman, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Elijah Muhammad, Louis Farrakhan, Katie Cannon, Delores Williams, and Jacquelyn Grant. Brief descriptions of their lives and contributions, among a host of other names, convince the reader of the necessity to carry research further by consulting biographies of selected figures and reading in the treatises they wrote.

A third feature of the book is its attention to what makes black Christianity different from the dominant white practice of faith. He suggests several aspects. It is more spirit-focused, relying on its African religious heritage. Religion must be felt, which makes preaching, praying, and singing more emotion-laden than typical white worship. Again, the African-American churches, as a matter of course, are politically engaged and socially committed. They have had to care for people's needs in a society where resources are not equally available to all. And, lastly, a case could be made that the black churches play a more crucial role in the formation of identity and the creation of meaning for its people than the white churches do for theirs. The difference is due to the fact that African-American religion is counter-cultural while white religion is not.

A fourth strength is the author's posing the question of "theodicy" that most troubles black consciousness in America: why did God allow slavery? He does not try to give it a philosophical answer. Instead, he gives examples of ways African-Americans have responded to that question. For some, slavery nullifies any truth claims of Christianity. Black Christians, on the other hand, have sometimes argued that God allowed slavery as a means of bringing Christianity to Africa. This position gave strong motivation for black missionary work in Africa. Before the Civil War and again in the Civil Rights era, many preached that God allowed blacks to be enslaved so as to prick the conscience of white Christians and bring them to repentance for their deeds. Another option strongly supported a positive African-consciousness. They compared themselves to the Israelites of the Old Testament, who, as God's elect, were permitted to be enslaved in Egypt, so that the miracle of Exodus could make them a light to all nations regarding God's love, grace, and saving power. Slavery, in this case, does not mean blacks are inferior (as their slave masters thought); but they were

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superior, chosen by God for a unique role in history. As African-American reflections on the evils they endured, these various options came across as vastly more compelling arguments than do attempts of white Christians to answer the question of slavery in America.

In my estimation the Bushmans' book on *Mormons in America* merits a mixed review as not equal in quality to the three volumes reviewed above. On the positive side it has several commendable aspects, especially for those who have little acquaintance with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Mormon history is summarized very well from its beginning under Joseph Smith in the 1820s in Palmyra, New York to the present world-wide status of the church. Along the way, key Mormon sites in Kirkland, Ohio; Independence, Missouri; Nauvoo, Illinois; and Salt Lake City, Utah are woven into the saga of the people, their faith, their persecutions, and their accomplishments. The desperate trek from Illinois to Utah is well told.

The authors also do a good job of setting forth Mormon beliefs as they developed over time, and the sources of their faith in the books they regard as scripture. Key leaders in the movement are introduced, and the structure of the church and its ministry is explained. Highlighted are the relief and social services agencies of the church. Many also would find the description of temple activities enlightening (p.109). The depictions of the duties of ordinary Mormons are positive, especially as they relate to strong family bonds.

The parts of the book that one might call social history come through with candor and the support of good statistical research. Claudia Bushman had previously written the book *Mormon Sisters: Women in Early Utah*, and this interest and expertise seem to account for chapter 6, which is devoted to Mormon women in the years 1831-1890. On the subject of polygamy, she points out that it was hardest on the women, who could admit their problems to each other even though they defended it publicly against the critics and opponents of the Mormon religion (pp. 86-89). She notes the role of women in the social ministries of the church and points out that Mormon women had the right to vote in Utah fifty years before the woman's suffrage movement in the United States.

Chapter 8 is most enlightening on social data of all sorts: longevity (Mormons on average live 10 years longer than other U.S. Citizens); birth rates (Utah has the highest fertility rate in the country), divorce (slightly below the national average); premarital sex and teenage pregnancy (lower) while teenage child birth is high (since they are encouraged not to resort to abortion); and education (more Mormons go to college and graduate school than their peers). They are candid in admitting that the two year stints of young Mormon

missionaries are not very efficient in gaining new converts, but the size of the mission force produces good results, nonetheless (p.122). They also reveal that current rates of baptized members leaving the church run anywhere from 20-50% (p.116). Overall, the book presents the Mormon faith as attractive and growing; at 10 million members, and doubling in size every 15 years (p.11), the authors predict it will become a major world religion in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (p.131).

Negatively, this reviewer felt they sometimes failed to maintain proper emotional distance from their subject as is expected in academic work. This stands out when contrasted to Professors Diner and Raboteau, who strongly identify with their own people but understand that scholarly writing expects authors to be reporters and not cheerleaders. Several particulars point to this defect.

The crisis in leadership after Joseph Smith was killed produced a power struggle. The larger body of Mormons followed Brigham Young to Utah and became a great worldwide church. The reorganized church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints took Joseph Smith III (the founder's son) as their leader and continued at Nauvoo, Illinois (the prophesied site of the coming New Jerusalem). Smith's wife Emma also stayed with this group. They are still a functioning church group, primarily in the mid-west. They deserve more attention than the authors give them (p.53).

The report of the Mountain Meadows Massacre in Utah is presented as a regrettable incident that left a dark blot on the Mormon Church (pp.77-78). Still the incident is interpreted in such a way as to absolve Mormon leadership from guilt, putting most of the blame upon the Missouri party passing through Mormon territory and upon the actions of local American Indians. No mention is made of a considerable body of evidence that challenges these interpretations.

Claudia Bushman is obviously interested in the role of Mormon women as is clear from the accounts in chapter 6. One is a bit surprised, then, that on p.115 the book is content to report the church's belief that men and women are equal in status but different in roles, meaning women cannot function in congregational ministry roles or in general authority positions in the church. Do the authors support this stance? Or did they find it prudent not to critique or challenge the church's stance?

Admittedly the Bushmans' write under difficult circumstances. They note (p.16) that the stories of Joseph Smith's original visions is what separates Mormons from other Christians. Mormons have not yet received the acceptability among North Americans that both Jews and African-Americans have. Therefore, Diner and Raboteau do not need to be advocates for their people in the same as the authors of the last volume feel they must.

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Also, the need to write for an academic audience - and its demand for critical objectivity -while not offending one's church (which wants favorable views projected to the public) is a daunting task for any author. These considerations probably need to be factored into the negative critiques of the book.

The four volumes of this review, along with the three titles reviewed previously in the *Ashland Theological Journal*, are samples of the entire project. The series succeeds in providing volumes of significant content and high interest. There is very little to criticize in these books. One is well served by reading individual titles or in purchasing the entire set. At. \$28 a volume, they are well worth the price.





# *The Institute of Formational Counseling*

Through The Institute of Formational Counseling, Ashland Theological Seminary will equip Christian leaders to minister to broken people, leading them to new-found freedom in Christ. The focus of the Institute will be upon the ministry of Inner Healing Prayer, Transformational Spiritual Direction and Spirit-directed Counseling. We have already found that equipping leaders in these ministries has a profound effect on those being trained and the men and women they serve. Through the Institute we will, each year, offer Spirit-empowered training opportunities to the broader Christian community.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Inner Healing Prayer Seminar:** The Institute will hold training seminars in Inner Healing Prayer for those men and women engaged in caregiving ministries. Our particular focus will be upon pastors and professional Christian counselors, however gifted Christian lay persons will be encouraged to attend.

**January 14-17, 2004 & June 9-12, 2004**

**Speakers Forum:** The Institute will host several two day events where a recognized Christian servant will come to share his/her particular expertise in the areas of Inner Healing Prayer, Spiritual Direction, and Spirit-directed Counseling. These events will begin on Thursday evening and continue through Friday afternoon. The general public is encouraged to attend..

**February 26-27, 2004, Featuring Steve Seamonds:**

*Wounds That Heal*

**April 21-22, 2004, Featuring Don Williams:**

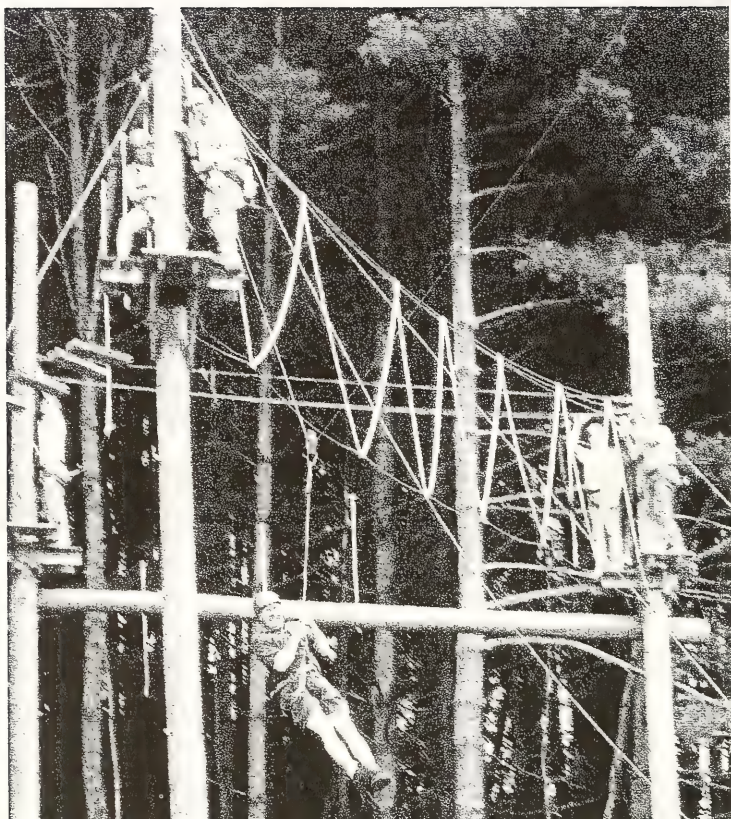
*Jesus and Addiction*

**National Conference on Formational Counseling:** The Institute will host a National Conference each year. This conference will include training seminars and plenary sessions featuring nationally recognized leaders in the field of Counseling, Spiritual Formation and Inner Healing Prayer.

**August 4-7, 2004, Theme: Inner Healing Prayer**

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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### Book Reviews

*The Leadership Bible, New International Version* (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1998). 1679 pages, paper, \$24.99.

The NIV Leadership Bible is one in a sea of different "life situation" Bibles that can be purchased from your favourite Christian book retailer. There seems to be such a plethora of these Bibles, each with its own series of notes for the reader's edification, it is getting to the point where one might roll one's eyes and ask, "Another one?"

This Bible, which is also available in hard cover, is replete with leadership tips and mini-studies, as well as a "unique home-page study system" which is laid out in three easy steps on the laminated bookmark, which comes with the Bible. One can use this method to engage in studies under the rubrics of personal development, skills, and relationships, with a great variety of sub-topics under each rubric. These studies are designed to last either one or two weeks and can be used in groups or in personal devotions. Among the "home-page" contents are studies in character, integrity, leader qualifications, wisdom, accountability, conflict management, decision making, time management, interpersonal relationships and servant leadership – all issues that matter to people who are in leadership, either in the church or in the world. There are suggested passages for memorization included in each weekly study.

My own experience in following these different studies is that, while they are faithful to the texts they are set with, they tend to apply more to those who are involved in lay leadership, in the church or outside the church. As a pastor, I found some of the applications somewhat pedantic, but that may be why they didn't call it the "Pastoral Leadership Bible". Occasionally, I found that the hermeneutics were stretched a bit to come up with the leadership principles that are applied, particularly in the Old Testament. However, if one is prepared to overlook these – and they may merely show a theological bias – the other features of this Bible that foster the application of Christian leadership principles in daily life outshine the parts which one might consider controversial.

Studies of different Bible characters are also available in this Bible. For example, surrounding Genesis 14, there is a brief (12-line) commentary on the life of Melchizedek. The editors comment on what is known biblically about Melchizedek, and close with an application for leaders: "Melchizedek met Abram's physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Often the best remembered leaders are those who graciously serve the individuals who comprise their team. Melchizedek points us to Jesus not only as a priest and king, but also as a servant leader" (p. 18).

The paperback version is bound surprisingly well, and sits open without a great deal of struggle, except at the front and back. It is somewhat heavy, as these sorts of study Bibles tend to be, but this is necessary because of all the "extra" notes that have been placed in it.



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I would commend this Bible particularly to those who are in leadership positions outside the church. The kind of person who comes to mind is the man or woman who is responsible for making significant decisions in his or her job, and needs to be able to do so with integrity and good ethical practice – something we would wish for anyone in leadership, but especially Christians in the workplace. *The NIV Leadership Bible* is another useful tool in making disciples for Jesus Christ.

Jeffrey F. Loach

Phyllis Trible, Tikva Frymer-Kensky, Pamela J. Milne, and Jane Schaberg. *Feminist Approaches to the Bible*. Edited by Hershel Shanks. Biblical Archaeology Society: Washington, D.C. 1995. 116 pp, paper, \$11.95.

This book contains the collected talks of four feminist biblical scholars presented at a symposium sponsored by the Resident Associate Program, Smithsonian Institution. Each scholar wrote one chapter and the final chapter includes the Q & A session following their presentations. These women represent a wide range of positions regarding the biblical text. Phyllis Trible and Tikva Frymer-Kensky view the Bible as personally valuable while Pamela Milne advocates abandoning scripture as authoritative. All work within a feminist perspective – considering the text and its message through the eyes and experiences of women.

Trible begins the discussion with a brief description of her own journey of being a woman who loved scripture but recognized the patriarchy that permeates the text and the history of its interpretation. She then describes briefly some of her work with Eve and finishes with a discussion of Miriam, Moses' sister. In this work she shows how one can lift out the marginal and suppressed voices in the text and begin to see these women hidden by the confines of patriarchy.

Frymer-Kensky states that feminism has raised the question about the nature of monotheism and the gender message it conveys. How can women embrace a religion when it has been accompanied by messages of unequal gender relationships and male domination in a hierarchy? She begins by describing the role of the male and female gods of the Sumerians and the Babylonians and then considers Israel's religion. In monotheism, God is not a sexual being, and the ordering of the world is no longer a battle between male and female gods. The result, according to Frymer-Kensky, is that the warrant for male domination is removed, and the text does not explain how to control women, but rather refrains from talking about them at all. She points out that even within a still patriarchal text women continue to show up knowing what to do and how to do it.

Milne's opening statement, "The Bible is the single most important sustaining rationale for the oppression of women," is sure to get the reader's attention. While her solution, to abandon the authority of scripture and relegate it to an interesting but inherently flawed book of historical interest, will not sit well with Christians, her chapter is well worth reading. Milne describes the historical efforts by women to bring a woman's perspective to understanding the Bible, focusing on two time periods, 1850-



1920 and then 1970- present. She notes the resistance the early effort faced primarily from other Christians, even those who shared the same social goals of abolition or women's suffrage. She then catalogs the efforts of recent scholarship to redeem the text for women, noting the efforts of Tribble, Mieke Bal, Esther Fuchs, etc. She concludes that it is not simply the past interpretations that are problematic but the text itself. I found her critique of patriarchy and how it works in the biblical text to be well written and clear. For those who wonder why women are angry in the church, this is the chapter to read.

Schaberg outlines 8 areas of feminist interest when considering a text in the New Testament. She then uses these to consider the character of Mary Magdalene. Historical information available in the text, the egalitarianism in the early church, and details about the wider Jewish culture are contrasted with the tradition received about Mary through the centuries. Schaberg points out that the image of Mary as a whore is deeply ingrained in tradition and yet nowhere in the Bible is she directly connected to it. Instead she was very possibly a leader within the early church. Schaberg concludes that it can be changes in politics that govern what is accepted as truth and the willingness to regain this image of Mary as a leader rather than a whore (or to host a symposium on feminist approaches to the Bible) may reflect shifting changes in the relations of power more than a new discovery in biblical studies.

This book lays out the concerns and problems women have with scripture and with past interpretation. It also provides an overview of some of the ways in which feminist scholarship can open up scripture for women. At the same time some of the solutions are equally problematic, but this demonstrates the difficult position of women. Often they feel compelled to choose between the faith of their fathers and their gender. This book is a good overview of the range of feminist scholarship and thinking for those who are willing to listen to the voices of women.

Donna Laird

J. William Whedbee. *The Bible and the Comic Vision*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. xii+315 pp., hardback \$59.95.

To some readers the use of the word "comic" in connection with the Bible may seem odd. Modern readers generally associate comedy with various kinds of entertainment, from subtle humor to the frivolous, even the vulgar and obscene.

In *The Bible and the Comic Vision*, J. William Whedbee seeks to correct this misunderstanding by introducing the reader to the comedic elements in the Bible. (The title is somewhat misleading; Whedbee's focus is exclusively on the Hebrew Bible.) According to Whedbee, "the Bible revels in a profoundly ambivalent laughter that by turns is both mocking and joyous, subversive, and celebrative, and finally a laughter that results in an exuberant and transformative comic vision" (pp. 4-5).

Whedbee describes the "anatomy of comedy" (p. 7) "from four interrelated perspectives: (1) plot-line, (2) characterization of basic types, (3) linguistic and stylistic strategies, and (4) functions and intentions" (p. 7). He makes frequent reference to

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Northrop Frye's image of comedy as a "U-shaped plot." According to Frye, "action sink[s] into deep and often potentially tragic complications, and then suddenly turn[s] upward into a happy ending." This plot "is embedded in the comic vision in Genesis, Exodus, Esther, and especially Job" (p. 7)

Within this comic vision we find "conventional types: buffoons, clowns, fools, simpletons, rogues, and tricksters." Whedbee's reading of the biblical texts identifies these elements in, e.g., the serpent, Jacob and Rebekah, Isaac and Esau, Moses, Pharaoh, even, in some cases, Yahweh!

Comedy characteristically displays certain stylistic habits and strategies: wordplay, puns, parody, hyperbole, redundancy, and repetitiousness. Comedy focuses on "incongruity and irony, highlighting discrepancy, reversal and surprise" (pp. 8f.) In the Bible, as in most other classic literature, comedy is employed toward a greater end. According to Whedbee, in the Bible "comedy perennially takes up arms against the forces that stifle life and laughter, though even here its barbed arrows generally only sting, not kill.... Comedy celebrates the rhythm of life with its times of festivity and joyous renewal, but it must frequently resort to ridicule in order to bring down the arrogant and boastful who block or threaten the free movement of life" (p. 9). "Biblical comedy has the power both to subvert and transform political, social and religious structures" (p. 11).

The book is divided into two parts. In Part I (The Genesis of Comedy – The Comedy of Genesis) Whedbee examines Genesis 1-11 ("The Comedy of creation" [pp. 19-63]) and Genesis 12-50 ("Domestic comedy in the household of faith: Israel's fathers and mothers as comic figures" [pp. 64-126]). Part II ("Generating Comedy: Biblical Texts and the Drive to Comic Regeneration") treats, in respective chapters, Exodus and Esther ("two comedies of deliverance"), Jonah ("Jonah as joke: a comedy of contradiction, caricature, and compassion"), Job ("creation, chaos, and carnival"), and the Song of Songs. The book concludes with a chapter entitled "Towards a comprehensive view of biblical comedy" (pp. 278-288).

Many of the "comedic aspects" of Genesis which Whedbee notes (wordplays, puns, Jacob [the "Trickster"], etc.) are well known. However, as Whedbee points out, these features "energize the narrative and often form climactic "punch-lines," emerging as little jokes embedded in linguistic play, jokes that convey forcefully the humor and wit of Israel's ancient story-tellers" (p. 62). The strength of Whedbee's work is his close reading of the texts and his ability to drive the reader back to the texts themselves. In that regard I found many of Whedbee's readings to be suggestive, particularly his reading of Job and of Jonah.

In his conclusion (pp. 278-288) Whedbee highlights the further subversive use of biblical materials in Jewish tradition, how Jonah and Esther, for example, were utilized by the rabbis as readings in the great festivals of Yom Kippur and Purim, respectively.

Some readers may be put off by several of Whedbee's suggestions regarding the depiction of Yahweh as a character in the stories. Thus, in summarizing his reading of Genesis, Whedbee writes, "Yahweh emerges as a rather capricious, whimsical deity who is satirized as a sometimes unthinking tyrant who can be both life-giving and death-

dealing" (p. 61). "[E]ven God himself is also parodied [in Exodus] as a capricious, whimsical deity who delights in his own power and glory, gloating over the defeat of any and all rivals, even when it means destruction and death" (p. 158). In his reading of Job, Whedbee notes that the God of the poetic portions "may still have the power to determine a person's destiny, but already the question is implicit whether this kind of God is still righteous and trustworthy" (p. 229). However, it is precisely the struggle with this question that is at the heart of the book of Job.

Unfortunately, there are several printing errors in this book. A number of Hebrew terms are incorrectly transliterated (pp. 76, 78, 81, 82, 95, 96, 207). On page 234 Job 16:3 should read "what moves you" rather than "what move you." In footnote 13 on page 266, Augsburg is incorrectly spelled Augsburg (also in the bibliographic entry under "Murphy, Roland E"). There are also a number of errors in the bibliography. Commentary series are repeatedly set in italics. A number of entries of articles lack page numbers (e.g., Ackerman, James; Turner, L. A.). These errors do not, however, seriously affect the importance of this book. It ought to be read and wrestled with by every student of the Bible.

David M. Phillips, Galion, Ohio

*The NIV Study Bible Library* on CD-ROM (32-bit edition, version 2.6). Published by Zondervan Interactive ([www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com)). Includes 1 CD-ROM and a Reference Software User's Guide of several hundred pages. \$129.97.

This piece of silicon magic contains a virtual treasure trove of reference material that would take up far too much shelf space in my study were I to buy each volume separately. On one CD, you get the complete text of the New International Version (including footnotes), an Anglicized Greek New Testament, the King James Version, the New American Standard Bible, the NIV Study Bible notes, the NIV Bible Dictionary, Captions of Maps and Cities, Nave's Topical Bible, the Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties, the Expository Dictionary, the NIV Bible Commentary, the New Revised Standard Version (including footnotes), some "Inspirational Readings" (Bible passages for particular feelings and occasions), and a section of verse notes for the user to create. It will link to your word processor if you ask it nicely. On top of all this, there is an Atlas with exceptional browse features (though toggling back and forth between them proved challenging). As if that were not enough, also included with this CD is the STEP reader, which is a tremendous search tool, and is used quite commonly among different kinds of Bible study software.

The program begins with four windows for the NIV, NIV Bible Commentary, Nave's Topical Bible, and the NIV Bible Dictionary, though it can be set up to open any of the supplied programs. Within these windows are numerous text links, and each window knows what the other is doing – e.g., when you are scrolling through the NIV Bible Commentary, the NIV text window changes verses as you scroll through the commentary. I loaded it onto both my home computer (an ancient Pentium 133) and my office computer (a still-rather-long-in-the-tooth Pentium II 433). Loading time only



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varied by a minute, as even the slower computer took only six minutes to do a "typical installation", which included all books, the Atlas and the STEP reader. This allows one to use most of the programs without needing to put the CD-ROM into the drive every time. The exception, I found, was the STEP reader, which requires the CD to be inserted with each use.

I happen to own the Expositors' Bible Commentary on CD-ROM, also produced by Zondervan Interactive, which uses exactly the same interface. What I found puzzling was that I could not make the two programs talk to each other. It had been installed well before the NIV Bible Study Library, with typical installation; I would have thought that the new program would have recognized the previously-installed one, and set things up so that the two could interact. But alas, I must open yet another program to do that!

This program comes with a sixty-day money-back guarantee, and claims to run with Windows 3.1 or Windows 95. I run it at home with Windows 95 and at the office with Windows 98, with no differences. It requires a Windows-supported video card and printer, and a bare minimum of 4 MB of hard disk space. A complete installation will require 45 MB.

The User's Guide is set up in different sections in a user-friendly manner. As with most computer programs, however, I found I caught on more quickly to the various features of the program just by fiddling around and using it. I would recommend this software investment for students, pastors, scholars, and perhaps especially those who are leading small groups for Bible study.

Jeffrey F. Loach

## Some Biblical Studies Computer Resources

It is impossible to keep up with the constant stream of material which is being made available electronically for those who wish to study the Bible. The task is impossible, but the effort to review at least some of the resources is rewarding.

The Zondervan Corporation of Grand Rapids has been active in producing a number of their volumes electronically through their imprint "Zondervan Interactive." A product which will be very useful for teachers and preachers is *Zondervan Theological Dictionaries for Windows* (2002; \$199.88). It contains the complete text of both the *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, edited by Willem van Gemeren, and of the *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, edited by Colin Brown, as well as a small Bible atlas. People have found both of these two dictionaries indispensable in their print versions, and now the electronic versions are even more so, as well as being easier to use. This is due to the added value of the computer for such things as searches and cutting and pasting into word processing documents. The program opens with three windows containing *NIDOTTE*, *NIDNTT*, and the NIV text. There are active hyperlinks in each dictionary which will pull up the scripture passage referred to if it is clicked. Searches are available for all 3 resources, with the search



taking place in the active resource. They can be done through a pop-down menu, or through the use of the right mouse button.

This is an economical way to acquire the two dictionaries. They can be purchased separately. *NIDOTTE* is selling for \$199.99 for the print version and \$129.99 for the individual electronic version (\$149.99 for Macintosh), while *NIDNTT* is \$169.99 in print and \$119.99 for either Mac or Windows.

The same ease of use has been provided for another Zondervan product, the electronic version of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, edited by Frank E. Gaebelein. These volumes have been well-received since they started to appear in print in 1976, and their life-span will be increased through this electronic means. They also provide substantial savings on CD, available at \$199.99 for Windows and Mac, compared to \$454.92 for the print versions of both the OT and NT volumes. Students and pastors will find all of these resources, as well as others produced by Zondervan, valuable on their home or office computer.

Another, different kind of resource has been made available by Todd Bolen, professor at the Israel Bible Extension (IBEX) campus of The Master's College. He has produced an 8-CD set entitled "Pictorial Library of Bible Lands", which is available through his web site ([www.bibleplaces.com](http://www.bibleplaces.com)). He has separate CDs covering: Galilee and the north; Samaria and the center; Jerusalem; Judah and the south; Jordan; Egypt; Turkey (Paul's travels and the churches of Revelation); and Greece and Rome. There is also a supplementary CD of aerial shots of Judah and Jerusalem. The material is available for \$30 per CD, or \$195 for the set of 8. Unlike many programs, these CD's are not self-extracting, but the pictures can be viewed through a web browser, and many of them are available in the form of Powerpoint presentations. The quality of most of the pictures is good, though some of the captions are difficult to read when their letters and the background shot do not provide sufficient contrast. This kind of material can put flesh-and-bones on what can often be just dry pen-and-ink. They will find a useful place in the classroom, the study, and even in the pulpit.

David W. Baker

Bruce M. Metzger, *The Bible in Translation: Ancient and English Versions*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001. 200 pp., paper, \$14.99.

Felicitous is an appropriate description of this flowing work by this world renowned biblical scholar and author. It reads with smooth facility that is fascinating in its affair with the translation history of the Bible. While the title sounds mundane, one will find the reading absorbing. In whole or in part, the Bible has been translated into over 2,000 languages and dialects. Dr. Metzger outlines the history of Bible translation in a way that will intrigue the reader. Included in this work is the captivating and careful analysis of more than fifty versions of the Bible.

Dr. Metzger was the George L. Collard Professor of New Testament Language and Literature, Emeritus, at Princeton Theological Seminary. In addition to chairing the NRSV translation committee, he has participated in two other translation projects plus

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consulted on numerous others. He is a recognized expert in ancient biblical manuscripts and is eminently qualified as author of this work.

*The Bible in Translation* is a captivating survey beginning with the earliest translation of the Old and New Testaments. Included for each version is an engaging relating of origin, production, objectives, characteristics and strengths. The work flows from the knowledge, research and personal experience of the author.

Part I, "The Ancient Versions," begins with the Septuagint and includes Jewish Targums, Syriac, Latin Coptic, Gothic, Armenian, Georgian, Ethiopic, Arabic, Sogdian, Slavonic and Nubian Versions. English versions receive 68% of the page space of the book. Part II includes the treatment of the Bibles of Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, Matthew, Taverner, Great, Becke, Geneva, Bishop, Rheims-Douay, King James, Harwood's N. T., Thomson, Noah Webster, Julia E. Smith, British Revised, American Standard, New English, New International, three Jewish translations, Good News, Reader's Digest, Contemporary English. There is also a section on paraphrases of the Bible including Henry Hammond's (1653), Philip Doddridge, F.F. Bruce, J.B. Phillips, Kenneth Taylor's L.B. and the N.L.B. and Peterson's *The Message*. Plus there is a treatment of the major version revisions.

While not as comprehensive as some, this is truly an exciting history of the translation of the Bible. It reads like a novel, captivating the interest of the reader from the first page to the end. Filled with historical data, it is an engaging experience for anyone interested in the history of ancient and English versions of the Bible.

Richard Allison

Allen P. Ross. *Introducing Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001. 565 pages, \$39.99.

In this volume, Allen P. Ross has provided us with a thorough teaching grammar for beginning Hebrew students. Each aspect of grammar and syntax is clearly presented with an adequate amount of examples. He provides a balance of linguistic and philological perspectives, combining age-old methods of language learning with more modern methods based on recent discoveries in pedagogy and linguistic theory. In his explanations, he does not shy away from using more technical, linguistic terminology. However, he does define each potentially unfamiliar term as it comes up. This makes his book an excellent grammar for students who have had no prior language experience, yet it is not too simple for those who have.

Ross's textbook is divided into four sections. The first, "Signs and Sounds," devotes six entire lessons to the alphabet and pronunciation. His detailed pronunciation guide and transliteration chart are very helpful. In the second and longest section, "Forms and Meanings," Ross systematically presents basic Hebrew grammar, covering everything from nouns to all the major verb stems and forms. Some basic syntax is introduced in this section as well. He includes exercises at the end of each lesson that

require the student to translate from Hebrew to English and, through lesson 34, from English to Hebrew.

"Texts and Contexts" is the title of the third section, where the grammar is applied and syntax becomes a more prominent focus. This section takes a more inductive approach to the teaching of Hebrew than the previous section. In each chapter, Ross presents any pertinent syntactical information and then guides the student, verse by verse, through a longer passage from Genesis. This is to help the student synthesize the material already learned and process any new information. A review of related grammar and syntax is then presented at the end of each chapter. Pertinent aspects of the Masorah and the critical apparatus of *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) are introduced in this section as well. The last section of Ross's grammar, "Study Aids," includes 50 pages of lesson reviews, where an outline of each chapter is given. Also included in this section are a Hebrew-English and an English-Hebrew Glossary, verb paradigms, and charts of the Masoretic accents of the Hebrew Bible.

Ross has included in this textbook a number of features that make it unique and "user friendly." First of all, the type face is exceptionally clear. This can often be stumbling block when the student is working with symbols he/she has never encountered before. Also, the vocabulary in each lesson is presented with more than the usual one- or two-word definition. Ross connects many of his vocabulary words with cognates or with a familiar usage in Modern Hebrew/Judaism. This gives the student memory aids and helps with understanding the broader meaning of the word. Ross also gives two very helpful review sections. In these, he presents a "mechanical parsing method" for regular verbs (in the first review) and for irregular verbs (in the second). It is a step-by-step tool designed to help the beginning Hebrew student learn how to recognize and parse verbs in their various forms. It is good way of helping the student organize the information he/she has just learned and apply it systematically.

While Ross's grammar is thorough, clear, and up-to-date, it does have a few drawbacks. First of all, his translation exercises do not include Biblical passages until lesson 25. This can be rather discouraging to the beginning student, not to mention feeling artificial and contrived. Another drawback is the occasional "overstuffed" lesson. In most of his lessons, Ross gives enough new grammar to be challenging but not overwhelming. However, in just a handful of these lessons, he tries to present too much new information, causing frustration for the teacher and/or the student.

Overall, Ross's grammar is well-written, up-to-date, and a welcome addition to the teaching of Biblical Hebrew. He has combined solid pedagogical techniques with a thorough presentation of grammar and syntax to give us a good, comprehensive teaching text for beginning Hebrew students.

Jennifer Quast, Hebrew Union College

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David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis-Malachi*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999. 330 pp., \$34.99.

Many Christians make every effort to understand what they read in the Bible. We look for any key or help that will give us the upper hand in understanding the content and even the structure of what we read. Dr. Dorsey has compiled a wonderful and fairly concise resource (considering the range of the subject) regarding the Old Testament that is a necessary resource for any pastor, scholar, Bible student, or even the ambitious lay person.

Dorsey, through more than a decade of research and notes, has compiled for the English language scholar a wonderful method to help any reader of the Bible to identify and better understand the relationship between the meanings and the messages of the Old Testament books. Using internal observations of literary structure, Dorsey helps the reader understand that the original authors of the Old Testament had both intent and methodology in the presentation of their messages.

Dorsey breaks down each book of the Old Testament into understandable messages by demonstrating the structure the author used to construct his message. Faced with analyzing the literary structure of an oral culture is an enormous task, one with took many years and meticulous research. *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament* has broken the subject into seven sections, with each section fluidly interacting with the other sections. The seven sections are: an introduction, the Law of Moses, the historical books, the poetic books, the major prophets, the minor prophets, and a solid conclusion with some helpful observations and practical applications of the book.

Dorsey's abundant use of sources and notes are very helpful to the reader for understanding the book better as well as understanding how he arrived at his conclusions. His passion for understanding his subject is evident through the helpful footnotes and comments.

In short, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament* is a solid resource for any pastor, helping to preach sermons that communicate more clearly the author's message; for the missionary it will provide encouragement and clarity to God's desires for all people, everywhere; for the lay person it will provide training and clarity to the message of the Bible; for the scholar it will be helpful for understanding the Old Testament in a fresh and reviving way.

Bradley E. Kittle

Victor P. Hamilton, *Handbook on the Historical Books*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001. 557 pp., hardback, \$32.99.

Victor Hamilton's *Handbook on the Historical Books* is a companion volume to his previous *Handbook on the Pentateuch*, and continues his careful, scholarly, yet highly readable examination of the biblical text. While written with the Bible College reader in mind, serious lay students will also find his book useful for expanding their



understanding of the historical books. Beginning with Joshua and ending with Esther, Hamilton examines the major issues and the relevant questions regarding the text, and takes a balanced view of the historical data. While he does not avoid examining some of the debated issues regarding the historicity of the text, Hamilton does not seek to make this issue a primary one, and thus treats only briefly such issues as the debate over the timing of the conquest of Jericho.

While the author treats the text as actual history, he does not end the discussion there. Hamilton also examines the text for theological themes, and for the part they play in ancient Jewish life – the people of Israel cannot be understood apart from their history.

The author follows closely with the biblical text and gives the reader an understanding of the broad strokes of the history presented there, while at the same time not getting lost in minute details which would overwhelm the reader. This is not to say that the material is not presented in a scholarly way; quite the contrary. The material is meticulously examined to express the relevancy and meaning of the text, yet remaining clear and necessarily concise as befits a book of this type. For those who wish to study the material in more depth bibliographies are presented at the end of each chapter and represent an excellent breadth of scholarship for each historical book.

Perhaps most refreshing in this handbook is the author's own commentary on various issues regarding the text. Hamilton has taught for thirty years at Asbury College, and this volume reflects his skills as a teacher, both as a theologian and as a biblical studies scholar. As a teacher of the historical books myself I found much that Hamilton wrote to be an excellent analysis of the text, and his explanation of the "how's" and "why's" of the biblical narrative is clear and insightful. Some of the connections made by the author show quite a depth of understanding between various Old Testament texts, and he makes ample use of comparison charts and flowcharts to track these connections. The result is a greater sense of connectedness to both the history and the theology of the Old Testament, and to the continuity of God's dealings with His people.

Perhaps best of all, it is an enjoyable read from start to finish as the author has crafted his own narrative style around the biblical text such that the continuity of the history does not get lost in the individual treatments of the historical books. This volume belongs in the library of every person who seeks to understand the themes and significance of Israel's early history.

Robert Gulley, Cincinnati Bible College and Seminary

Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable & Relevant?* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001. 239 pp., \$13.00.

Are you looking for a refreshing book with a relevant and informed message dealing with contemporary issues surrounding the Old Testament canon? If you are like me, filled with too much information and lacking mental organization at times, Walter Kaiser, Jr.'s evaluation of the Old Testament is a must for your library. Kaiser has taken complex and dynamic information and given us his thoughts concerning the authority and reliability of the Old Testament gleaned from his research and experience.

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As with any argument or discussion, a good starting point can be the only foundation for a book to deal with any subject with integrity and responsibility. Kaiser whets the appetite of the reader by posing a simple question in the introduction of his book, "Does it matter"? Though simple, this question proves to be saturated with meaning as the book develops. As pastors, scholars, lay persons, and even new believers, the Christian is faced with intelligent questions by the unsaved throughout the world. Kaiser's starting point acknowledges this issue and allows the reader to know that he will address this issue.

Divided into four sections, the book looks at the Old Testament as if one were looking at the top of a pyramid from each of the four corners; each section still is able to see the top, but the top is not built upon any individual corner alone. The four sections Kaiser uses to address his topic are: the reliability of the Old Testament Canon and text, the reliability of the history of the Old Testament, the reliability of the message of the Old Testament, and the relevance of the message of the Old Testament for today's Christians.

*The Old Testament Documents* contains a responsible amount of citations, giving the reader an understanding that Kaiser understands his information. Not only does Kaiser use many sources, but he uses a good spectrum of sources, those sources whom he is critiquing as well as those scholars who side with his argument. In addition, Kaiser uses sources that are modern as well as some that are more seasoned with time. There is also a glossary of terms used, making a convenient reference.

In the midst of the many positive aspects of the book there are a few elements of the book that are not as well developed as they could be. For example, the most contemporary resource that Kaiser noted was from 1997; with a publishing date of 2001, many things can change in four years in the area of archeology leading to a better understanding of the Bible. Another example of a lesser aspect of the book is the brief focus on the documentary hypothesis. Not only is this argument against the theory, it is underdeveloped. When reading this section I had a feeling that Kaiser disagreed with this theory and in some sense bordered on the edge of forming a "straw man" against the theory.

However, with the exception of a few minor points, *The Old Testament Documents* is a good resource. Dealing with issues such as archaeology, the documentary hypothesis, the Dead Sea scrolls, the development of the Old Testament Canon, the importance of trusting the Old Testament, as well as many other important issues, Kaiser wraps the confusing theories surrounding the Old Testament into a nice package that will be a wonderful help for anyone seeking to make sense of all the scholarship, the misunderstandings and any supposed contradictions of the Old Testament. *The Old Testament Documents* will be a great addition to any ambitious layperson's, pastor's, missionary's, or scholar's library.

Bradley E. Kittle

Alec Motyer. *The Story of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001. 191 pages. \$16.99

In this work, Motyer gives us a companion volume to John Stott's *Men with a Message*, which was revised by his son, Stephen Motyer, and renamed *The Story of the New Testament*. Like the first volume, this work attempts to show us the content of the scriptures through the eyes of its authors. Unfortunately, this is much more difficult with the Old Testament. While Stott can devote a chapter to each human author of the New Testament, Motyer must work with issues of Mosaic authorship in the Pentateuch, anonymity in the Historical Books, and obscurity in the Prophets of the Old Testament. Because of these difficulties, some of the unique perspective that characterizes the first volume has been lost.

In spite of these challenges, the present work effectively communicates the truth of the Old Testament in a clear and attractive way. Motyer's first chapter is entitled "Starting with Jesus," which sets a strong evangelical tone for the entire book. He then tackles the Old Testament section by section, deftly handling the major theological issues of each.

Like *The Story of the New Testament*, this is intended as an introductory text, and would be useful in an adult Sunday school class or as a high school text. In order to relate to such an audience, Motyer has carefully explained some of the more basic terms in the Old Testament, such as covenant and atonement. His writing style is direct, thoughtful, and insightful. The numerous photographs, maps, charts, and timelines are quite useful and add color and interest. Motyer also points out a number of patterns in the Old Testament writings that might be missed by the average reader. At times these patterns are oversimplifications, but they are effective in introducing ideas that may be new to the audience.

Like Stott, Motyer does not include many of the academic theories of Old Testament scholarship into the body of his text. However, Motyer does place some of these theories, such as Wellhausen's documentary hypothesis, into boxed features. Unfortunately, the books of Deuteronomy, Ruth, and Chronicles are also relegated to such boxed features.

Overall, this would be a great place for a student of the Old Testament to begin.

Jennifer Quast

Frank T. Seekins, *Hebrew Word Pictures*. Phoenix, AZ: Living Word Pictures Inc., 1994. 116 p.

Seekins has produced a simple and attractively illustrated history of the Hebrew alphabet. A child can read it with ease. Each letter is traced to its most likely pictographic origin. A sequence of scripts follows, illustrating metamorphosis through the centuries.

A second and more fundamental aim is more dubious. Seekins assumes that because solitary Hebrew letters have names (the first letter is called *aleph*, the sixth is

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vav), and because these names can with some degree of confidence be traced to a meaning (*aleph* corresponds to "ox", *vav* may mean "nail"), therefore one may infer that words spelled with these letters subsume the meaning of constituent letters. Thus *av* (spelled *aleph-vav*) with its standard translation "desire" is understood by Seekins as conveying that "lust is the strong [ox-like] nail (it binds you to itself)," (p. 34).

For an initially non-phonetic pictographic script such as Chinese with its thousands of characters, this line of reasoning can often prove reliable. Chinese words compounded of multiple characters may have been generated because of the need to convey meaning represented best by the combined meanings of individual characters (cf. Japanese script, descended from Chinese, where a single tree pictograph = "tree" or "wood", two trees compounded = "grove", three trees compounded = "forest"). It is unwise to presume the same logic holds for a phonetic script such as Hebrew with its sparse cluster of symbols (only 22 consonants).

Paul Overland

Katherine Doob Sakenfeld. *Just Wives? Stories of Power and Survival in the Old Testament & Today*. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville. 2003. 136 pp, paper, \$14.95.

Sakenfeld has created a thoughtful, well-written book useful for small groups. Each of six chapters begins with a discussion of a biblical wife (or wives) and then considers them from the perspective of contemporary women from a variety of cultures. Current issues such as survival, cultural differences, or resistance to injustice are raised and she shows how these stories can speak to these concerns. Sakenfeld makes use of recent literary scholarship on the Old Testament to look closely at the stories and raises some of the more disturbing questions about the narratives (Why would God send Hagar back to live with a harsh, jealous, Sarah? Is the relationship between Hosea and Gomer abusive [chapter 2:3-13], and does God support that?). She also questions the traditional understandings of these women by noting the cultural norms or societal rules under which they lived (Ruth or Esther), or noting the gaps in the narrative that can allow a variety of interpretations (Bathsheba or Michal), or by bringing into the conversation contemporary sensibilities about justice and power (Gomer). Sakenfeld's goal is to present the struggles of these women and consider how they speak to the social situations of people (especially women) today. She then closes each chapter with six or seven questions for group discussion.

*Just Wives?* demonstrates much of what is good about post-modern thinking. Reading a biblical account through the eyes of people with vastly different life experiences often introduces questions and applications not readily apparent to others. Sakenfeld quotes African American women who have found Hagar to be a heroine as she survives in a situation where she lacks power and privilege. She recounts the forced prostitution of young girls in Thailand and elsewhere for economic survival as a background for the discussion of Ruth. She brings the perspective of women who have



been battered by a husband to the book of Hosea. These women will find her treatment of Gomer and the book of Hosea to be redemptive as she evaluates the use of marriage as a metaphor for God's relationship with his people. This book is not a thorough treatment of these wives, but many of the more significant issues with the biblical text and contemporary interpretation are raised in a clear and insightful way and the discussions that can arise from this are sure to be fruitful.

Donna Laird

Ronald A. Simkins and Stephen L. Cook, et al, "The Social World of the Hebrew Bible: Twenty-Five Years of the Social Sciences in the Academy." *Semeia* 87. Atlanta: The Society of Biblical Literature, 1999. 265pp. \$19.95, soft back.

Do you desire to explore the social world of the Hebrew Bible? If so, then this is the book for you. *Semeia* is a journal produced by the Society of Biblical Literature that is dedicated to the introduction, exploration, and implementation of new topics and methods of biblical criticism. This particular volume of *Semeia* celebrates the twenty-fifth anniversary of the employment of the social sciences within biblical studies. Essays reflect the past, present, and future of the relationship between the various social scientific approaches and biblical studies.

Essay topics and authors include: "Ancient Perceptions of Space/ Perceptions of Ancient Space" by James W. Flanagan; "In the Shadow of Cain" by Paula M. McNutt; "The Gift in Ancient Israel" by Victor H. Matthews; "Whose Sour Grapes? The Addressees of Isaiah 5:1-7 in the Light of political Economy" by Ronald A. Simkins; "The Lineage Roots of Hosea's Yahwism" by Stephen L. Cook; "To Shame or Not to Shame: Sexuality in the Mediterranean Dispora" by Susan A. Brayford; "Gender, Class, and the Social Scientific Study of Genesis 2-3" by Gale A. Yee; "Ideology, Pierre Bourdieu's *Doxa*, and the Hebrew Bible" by Jacques Berlinerblau; and "Confronting Redundancy as Middle Manager and Wife: The Feisty Woman of Genesis 39" by Heather A. McKay.

Essays highlight the unique perspectives and insights that the social sciences have had, and indeed still do have, on interpretations of the biblical text. A number of essays reflect ideas and interests of the past, such as patronage and ideology, while others reflect current trends, such as gender and spatiality. More specific examples of the use of the anthropological models and social-scientific criticisms in this volume include the following: In "The Lineage Roots of Hosea's Yahwism" (p.145), Stephen L. Cook employs ethnographic studies from several African groups. The model Cook derives from this ethnographic study is then applied to an exegetical analysis of two passages in the book of Hosea (5:8-6:6 and 1:2-2:1). A second example is Heather A. McKay's essay "Confronting Redundancy as Middle Manager and Wife: The Feisty Woman of Genesis 39 (p.215)." In this essay McKay utilizes not only sociological and anthropological approaches to study the narrative and woman of Genesis 39, but incorporates reader-response criticism and management theory, as well.

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The social sciences have had more of an impact on biblical studies than anyone could have possibly imagined and to neglect its contributions would be a discredit to the discipline. Therefore, it is imperative that libraries begin to expand their biblical criticism sections to include texts that utilize social scientific approaches. On the whole, these essays offer perceptive and insightful information and would be a welcome addition to any biblical criticism library.

Cynthia Shafer-Elliott

Marti J. Steussey, *David: Biblical Portraits of Power*. Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999. Xii + 251 pp., hardcover, \$34.95..

The subtitle of this book is quite deliberate. Steussey does not pursue a "single unified narrative" (p. 4) of David, precisely because no such narrative exists in the Old Testament. Instead, she examines three major literary portraits of David in the Hebrew Bible: David according to the "primary history" (the Books of Samuel), David according to Chronicles, and David according to the Psalms. She concludes with a brief look (2 pages!) at David in the rest of the Old Testament.

This study is intended to help the reader view these various presentations and appreciate their distinctive features. Steussey keeps readers in the text and encourages them to listen. She is not afraid of the hard questions and, rightly, refuses any attempt at harmonization of the conflicting details and presentations. This is evident especially in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 ("Samuel's David as Innocent and Attractive Hero," "Reading David's Heart," and "David's Deeds and Words"). To what extent may it be said that David was "a man after God's own heart"? As Steussey concludes, "Our glimpses of David's heart have shown us a man more worldly-wise, more fallible, and considerably less pious than our first overview [chapter 4] of Samuel led us to expect. What has been lost in admirability, however, has been gained in believability. David's heart looks remarkably like anyone else's" (p. 70).

The whole of chapter 6, then, consists of "a more suspicious reading of other details of Samuel's David story" (p. 71). Steussey touches on more than thirty "problematic statements" and what they may reveal about the man David.

A further comparison (chapter 7) of David and Saul offers "little support for the common perception that Saul is a miserable sinner who deserves his fate, whereas David is an innocent and virtuous hero with just enough peccadilloes to verify his humanity" (p. 85). These are troubling details, not easily explained. Steussey suggests that God's approval of David was "not for David's sake, but Israel's" (p. 88). More troubling, perhaps, to some readers, is the issue of God's "consistency and justice" (see, e.g., pp. 88-91). Steussey does offer the following: "Our questions about David reflect back onto the God who supports him. How wonderful that God would embrace so fallible a human! How terrifying that divine power might flow in such a flawed channel!" (p. 91).

The analysis of the portrait of David in Chronicles (pp. 99-130) highlights a number of well-known aspects. Comparing this portrait to a stained-glass window, Steussey suggests that Chronicles "stylizes [David] in bright clear colors" (p. 99). So, for example, a reading of Nathan's temple oracle "suggests that God's answer is finally 'yes' rather than 'no' to David's proposal" (p. 111). Thus we find the Chronicler's emphasis on David's role in preparing for the construction of the temple.

Steussey's presentation of the portrait of David found in the Psalms is divided into four parts: "The Psalter: An Overview," "Psalms Speaking about David," "The Psalms of David," and "David and the Book of Psalms." We see in this presentation how the figure is utilized in the Psalter. The "psalms of David hint at a character somewhat like the one we saw in Samuel—passionate and enmeshed in conflict" (p. 185).

As we move through the books of the Psalter, this "David"—now symbolic of the royal dynasty—moves from naïve confidence in his own righteousness and God's support through experiences of defeat and finally the dynasty's fall, emerging somewhat chastened (Book 4) and aware that the promises of the royal covenant are subordinate to the demands of the Mosaic one. His voice becomes progressively less distinct from the people's as he leads them in worship in the restored community. As symbolic voice of a congregation united in joyful worship, this final "David" of the Psalter resembles the worship-organizing king we met in Chronicles (p. 186).

Readers looking for an historical, archaeological study of David will be disappointed with this work. Readers interested in how David is presented by these various biblical writers will read this work with appreciation. I found that even when I disagreed with Steussey I nevertheless came away with a greater desire to understand the texts and their portraits of David.

David M. Phillips

Martha Lynn Wade. *Consistency of Translation Techniques in the Tabernacle Accounts of Exodus in the Old Greek*. Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series 49. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2003. xiii + 280 pp., hardcover, \$99.00.

Wade is to be commended for even attempting to tackle this complicated and meticulous task. Wade, a Bible translator in Papua New Guinea, began this work as her doctoral dissertation at Union-PSCE. Her first chapter is an "Introduction" (1-13) where she sets out her purpose: "to examine the translation techniques in the tabernacle accounts of the Old Greek" (1). She is particularly concerned with the contradictory claims about the number of translators responsible for these sections. Methodologically, she examines the translation "with respect to choice of lexical equivalents, translation of grammatical structures, and accuracy in communicating equivalent information" (1). Generally, Wade argues that the first translation account is fairly consistent, while the second is not (3-4). She also surveys the various views of scholars from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century to present on the number of translators, *Vorlagen*, and other issues surrounding

the discrepancy (4-9). Next, she seeks to use computer aided analysis and objective observations mostly by use of Accordance software (10-11). Ultimately, Wade hopes that, "This book will contribute to the text critical study of the tabernacle accounts by providing a basis for discussion of the development and translation of the text" (9).

Rather than blindly presuming the MT was behind the Greek, Wade considers which "Hebrew *Vorlage*" (chapter 2, pp. 14-55) the translators used. Textual variants in the Qumran scrolls, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the Masoretic text are examined to identify Hebrew textual variants that might be a possible source of translation differences. Wade shows that the Samaritan Pentateuch betrays changes from the MT that are interpretative in nature. Similar interpretations of ambiguous MT texts, she contends, are likewise found in the Greek. Moreover, she argues that the *Vorlage* of the Greek was more like the text of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

In her next chapter, Wade considers "Lexical Consistency" (chapter 3, pp. 56-106) and looks to the word usage between the two accounts which has been major claim that there were a number of translators. Using Accordance Bible software, Wade has analyzed the "percentage of nouns and verbs that are rendered by one lexical equivalent in contrast to those that are rendered by more than one lexical equivalent" (57). Key is that "it is a context-sensitive translation with respect to the choice of lexical equivalents" (58). This is an important statement for Wade, for it reveals that accuracy for her lies in the conveyance of meaning rather than the employment of identical terms. Words used in the second account which are not the same as that of the first, but within an adequate semantic range of that in the first, permit her to consider the second an "accurate" translation.

Turning from lexicographical considerations, Wade next turns to the issue of the "Grammatical Consistency" (chapter 4, pp. 107-148) of the translators. Here she suggests that within a "free translation," such as the Greek of Exodus, the "choice of translation equivalents for grammatical structures is one of the indicators of a difference in the translator's interpretations of the text" (146). Moreover, grammatical variations are frequently the product of lexical choices made by the translator.

Wade's last substantive chapter deals with the issue of "Accuracy" (chapter 5, pp. 149-232). Here she classifies accuracies which "reflect a *Vorlage* similar to" the Samaritan Pentateuch, "reflect a difference in the status of meaning," and reflect a "difference in the quantity of meaning." Variants in readings must be considered in their respective contexts. Wade, for whom the Greek's *Vorlage* is generally unknown, defines accuracy as "the degree to which the G communicates the same meaning as the M" (12-13).

Wade's "Conclusion" (chapter 6, pp. 233-45), largely summarizes chapters 2-5 and evaluates previous hypotheses with respect to the unity of the core and the remainder of the second tabernacle account, the unity of the first and second accounts, and the nature of the translation. She concludes by briefly sketching a hypothetical sociological setting that would account for the results produced her examination of the tabernacle accounts of Greek Exodus. The most significant contribution of this study is that she



concludes that a second translator likely produced the second tabernacle account of the G Exodus using the translation of the first tabernacle account as a point of reference" (13).

The book contains three appendices: Appendix A ("Classification of Minuses in the Second Account," p. 246), Appendix B ("Comparison of some Parallel Passages," pp. 247-249), and Appendix C ("Construction and Assembly of the Breastpiece," p. 250). It contains a comprehensive Bibliography (pp. 251-60) and several Indexes (261-80), including an index of OT passages (261-72), Greek words (272-77) and Hebrew words (277-80), as well as 18 Tables.

The book could have been improved with a subject index of grammatical and syntactical features discussed. Moreover, I question whether Wade has really solved the problems of the tabernacle translations or simply reworded the question. Not all the problems in these accounts are due to grammatical or lexicographical variations. Moreover, there are key terms, such as *katapetasma*, *kalumma*, *katakalumma*, *parapetasma*, and various other curtain and veil language which occur with significant variation in the second account for which she has provided less than adequate account. Indeed, the translator has at times seems to have created words!

Nevertheless, Wade's is a valuable contribution to the discussion for at least three reasons: First, she provides a mass of detailed, computer-aided analysis combined with linguistic know-how that makes hers a valuable reference tool. Second, no significant work has been done on this subject since Anneli Aejmelaesus, "Septuagintal Translation Techniques – A Solution to the Problem of the Tabernacle Account," Pages 381-402 in *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings* (Ed. G. J. Brooke and B. Lindars; Septuagint and Cognate Studies 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), and before that D. W. Gooding, *The Account of the Tabernacle: Translation and Textual Problems of the Greek Exodus* (Cambridge: University Press, 1959). Finally, Wade's first chapter, serving as an "Introduction" to her work, is the first place one should go when entering the potential quagmire of this subject. It is clearly written, remarkably thorough, and even-handed in its evaluation of key players. This book is an essential reference tool for anyone working in this fascinating but complicated subject. Readers should also know that in *SBL* has published the same work in paperback available for \$49.95.

Daniel M. Gurtner, St. Mary's College, University of St. Andrews, Scotland

Douglas Stuart. *Old Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*, Third Edition. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. Xx + 179 pp., paperback, \$18.95.

Most seminary students and graduates have encountered this work in its first two editions. Many professors have been requiring this text for their classes for over two decades (the first edition appearing in 1980)! It has proven to be an invaluable work for the beginner as well as for the pastor who seeks to use his or her exegetical work in sermon preparation.

This third edition is in many respects the same work as the previous edition. In a number of areas, however, Stuart has improved the text to make it even more useful. A

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comparison of the tables of content of the second and third editions demonstrates this. So, for example, in the second edition the heading for 8.a. of chapter 1 read, "Explain what is not obvious." In the third edition it reads, "8.1. Explain all words and concepts that are not obvious." 8.2 (formerly 8.b.) now reads, "Concentrate on the most important concepts, words, and wordings." 8.3 (8.c.) now reads, 'Do "word studies" (really, concept studies) of the most crucial words or wordings.' In section 7 (Grammatical Data) of chapter 2 Stuart has added a second example: "Identifying grammatical specificity: Hosea 1:2."

In chapter 4 Stuart has added entries dealing with the Hebrew University Bible Project and the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*. Under section 3 he has also added a subsection on works dealing with "Israelite and ancient Near Eastern culture." In his treatment of "Secondary Literature" (Section 11) Stuart has added a new entry dealing with "Computer Bibles." Finally, the book concludes with the addition of two lists: "A List of Common Old Testament Exegesis Terms" (pp. 171-175), and "A List of Frequent Hermeneutical Errors" (pp. 177-179).

These changes make an already extremely helpful guide even more useful. No doubt Stuart will make further changes in the future, but for now this book remains a must for the library of every teacher, student, and pastor. It is the last who should make constant use of this work because, as Stuart again points out, "The end of exegesis is preaching and teaching in the church" (p. x).

David M. Phillips

Ashby, G. W. *Go out and Meet God: A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*. ITC. Grand Rapids/Edinburgh: Eerdmans/Handsel Press, 1997. 164 pp., paper, \$18.00.

Larsson, G. *Bound for Freedom: The Book of Exodus in Jewish and Christian Traditions*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999. 368 pp., hardback, \$24.95.

Janzen, J. G. *Exodus*. Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997. 288 pp., paper, \$24.95.

Recent years have witnessed the publication of a stream of new commentaries on the book of Exodus. Many of these have been aimed at the interested lay-person, so much so that the choice available is likely to prove somewhat confusing. Which commentary is likely to be the most helpful?

While the three commentaries under review were all written primarily for laity and have much in common, there are significant differences between them. To a large extent this reflects the background of the individual authors. Godfrey Ashby is retired as assistant bishop (Anglican) of George, South Africa. Göran Larsson, a Swedish Lutheran, is a director at the Jerusalem Center for Biblical Studies and Research, having taught for some years at the Swedish Theological Institute in Jerusalem. Gerald Janzen has recently retired after teaching for 32 years at the Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, an

ecumenical institution associated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Hailing from three different continents, it is hardly surprising that these commentaries reflect something of the milieu within which their authors have lived in the final decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

This feature is perhaps most noteworthy in Larsson's work as he intentionally interacts with both Jewish and Christian traditions when explaining the text of Exodus. He writes with the conviction that in the past the contents of Exodus have often been misappropriated, especially by certain Christians keen to promote hostility towards Jews. Keen to redress this balance, Larsson draws deeply upon Jewish interpretations of Exodus, often describing these in considerable detail; for example, he devotes several pages to recounting the practices associated with Passover (pp. 86-90). While this is of value in seeing how certain Jewish traditions develop out of the Exodus story, it is important to remember that not all traditions reflect accurately the original meaning or significance of the text. Caution needs to be exercised when interpreting the book of Exodus through later Jewish or Christian traditions; the traditions themselves need to be evaluated against the biblical text.

The danger of relying too heavily upon 'traditional' interpretations may be illustrated by observing Larsson's discussion of the giving of the law at Mount Sinai. Here he follows a widespread Jewish tradition (involving several alternative chronologies) that the giving of the law took place fifty days after Passover, thus coinciding with the feast of Weeks (or Pentecost). On this basis he then proceeds to draw parallels between the events at Mount Sinai and the coming of the Spirit in Acts 2. Yet, the most natural reading of Exodus 19:1 suggests that the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai 70 days after the Passover; the third new moon after their departure from Egypt would give 14+28+28 days, assuming lunar months of 28 days. Unfortunately, this alternative reading of Exodus 19:1 destroys the foundation upon which Larsson associates the giving of the law at Mount Sinai and the giving of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem.

In addition, while Larsson draws widely upon Jewish materials, an element of selectivity is apparent. Consequently, it is not always made clear that Jews differed among themselves regarding the interpretation of particular texts. Moreover, some Jewish interpretations are ignored completely (e.g., the proposal that the commandment, "You shall not steal", ought to be understood as meaning, "You shall not kidnap"). Since this latter example is probably a mistaken interpretation of Exodus 20:15, Larsson may have decided not to include it. Nevertheless, it highlights the somewhat arbitrary nature of the material that has been used.

Writing against the background of recent political developments within South Africa, Ashby's discussion occasionally picks up on the relationship between the freeing of Israelite slaves from Exodus and the issue of emancipation in the modern world. While it would be easy to exploit the parallels that exist in this area, Ashby exercises good judgement and his evaluation of the book of Exodus in the light of liberation theology is helpful. Sensibly he observes that the process of liberation from human injustice is not an end in itself within the Exodus narrative. While the Israelites are freed from the Egyptian pharaoh's tyranny, they are subsequently invited by God at Mount Sinai to accept his

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sovereign lordship over them. As Ashby notes, to be truly free is to live in complete obedience to the King of Kings.

While Ashby's approach to Exodus and liberation theology commends itself, his reliance upon critical scholarship is likely to create difficulties for many lay readers. Although often disguised, the legacy of the Documentary Hypothesis shapes much of what Ashby has to say. Without further explanation, ordinary Christian readers are likely to find some of Ashby's remarks confusing and/or disquieting (e.g., the account of the building of the tabernacle in Exodus chs. 35-40 reflects worship in the Jerusalem temple and originates from a Priestly writer of the exile in Babylon).

Although Janzen's commentary lacks the distinctive hallmarks found in those of Larsson and Ashby, his treatment is no less informative or interesting. Drawing on a wide range of modern scholarly resources, Janzen provides a clear and usually helpful explanation of the text of Exodus. However, occasional lapses occur. When Janzen quotes with approval (p. 3) Jon Levenson's remarks on contrasting Moses and Hagar, he fails to observe that these rest on a misreading of Genesis 16:9, which does not state, contrary to what Janzen quotes, 'Submit ... to her harsh treatment'. Likewise, the affirmation (p. 150) that the Hebrew verb *ratsah* only designates 'murderous violence' (and therefore should be translated 'murder') is wrong; as Numbers 35:22-28 reveals, someone guilty of *ratsah*, understood here as accidental killing, was not to be put to death provided they remained within a city of refuge until the death of the high priest. Also, *ratsah* is used twice to refer to the execution of a murder (Num. 35:27, 30). (In passing, Janzen is not alone in making this mistake; Ashby also makes the same erroneous claim and in the process transliterates *ratsah* incorrectly.) Fortunately, such errors are few. And while others are very likely to disagree with Janzen's exposition of some passages (e.g., his discussion of leaven [pp. 83-85] and the Amalekite battle [pp. 121-124]), his overall treatment is very instructive and helpful.

All of these commentaries have much to teach, although, as is ever the case, each needs to be read with discernment. As they stand, the three volumes complement each other well, with the authors all contributing different insights worthy of further reflection. If, for whatever reason, it is necessary to choose only one, hopefully the observations given above will assist in making that choice.

T. Desmond Alexander, Union Theological College, Belfast

Richard D. Nelson, *Deuteronomy* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002). ix + 424 pp., hardcover, \$44.95.

Richard Nelson's point of view, here as elsewhere, is that the seventh century BC was formative for deuteronomic theology, two key reference-points being formal similarities between the biblical book and the Vassal Treaties of Esarhaddon, and Josiah's reform. Deuteronomy evinces wisdom features, and probably originated among scribal circles in Jerusalem in the time of Manasseh, though the formative group was diverse (pp. 6-8). It is fundamentally an address to free landholders.



The book underwent revisions, as evidenced for example, by the changes in the second person address forms. Regarding composition, Nelson essentially follows Noth's theory of the Deuteronomistic History. Consistent with this, he traces the growth of individual sections of Deuteronomy, finding for example in Deut 4 different origins for 4:1-14 (on the laws and commandments) and vv. 15-20 (the prohibition of images; p. 62). Exilic additions are found in 4:29-31 (and 30:1-10), as almost universally, but these are found to be distinct from 'the dominant theology of Deuteronomy' (since here blessing and curse are sequential rather than proffered alternatives), and this is in line with his location of Deuteronomy essentially in the politics of the seventh century. In general, Nelson maintains a focus on the message of the book as a whole, broadly within this horizon.

In political terms, Deuteronomy moved from the political periphery to the centre, at least for a time, when it was adopted by the Josianic reform program (p. 8). In character, it is 'impassioned motivational rhetoric' designed to produce decisive response from its hearers, with an emphasis on 'religious fidelity, personal morality, social responsibility, and trustworthy government' in 'a single aspiration for the human race' (p. 12).

Nelson's interpretation of the book is always rigorous and thought-provoking. He rightly avoids the view that Deuteronomy is radically secularizing. For example, on the law of Passover and Unleavened Bread (16:1-8), he sees the centralizing of this (now combined) feast as bringing into the sacrificial realm what had previously been non-sacrificial (he cites the use of the verb *zabah* in support; p. 207). However, this sits a little oddly with his view of ch. 12, where, in line with a majority of scholars, he thinks the slaughter of domestic animals for food in the cities, and so away from the sanctuary, is non-sacrificial. The term used is the same (*zabah*), but here Nelson claims that the term itself has been converted from 'kill for sacrifice' to the general 'slaughter' (pp. 154-55). The issue is more complicated than the location of the killing alone, for in fact there are both central and non-central aspects in both these deuteronomic laws. Nelson recognizes that 16:1-8 also has non-central aspects, but thinks that in that case Deuteronomy has compromised with its own rigorous centralism (p. 207). More satisfying is an attempt to understand the relationship between central and non-central as pervasive dimensions of Deuteronomy's vision for Israel living before Yahweh in the land.

On Deuteronomy as a political document I find again occasion to agree and disagree. He finds in 16:18-18:22 a 'constitutional' proposal, and here he explores the relation between centre and periphery more carefully. He rightly finds a tendency to the decentralization of power, and measures to limit the power of the king aim to meet 'the threat of monolithic tyranny inherent in centralization' (pp. 213-14). The centralization he finds in Deuteronomy is certainly not what he sees as the mythological concept of kingship portrayed for example in the Zion Psalms (p. 222). It is surprising at this point, however, that he declares the political program thus outlined theoretical and 'utopian' (pp. 213, 222). This seems to be at odds with his judgement that the book was both 'dissident' (originally) and also (for a time) aligned with the reform. If either or both of these propositions is true it would seem to entail that the ideas in the book are politically potent. This, in fact, is a tension in Nelson's portrayal generally: is the book part of the

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reform program, or is it distinct from it? It may be that the retreat into the utopian thesis is prompted by the difficulty, in the end, of aligning Deuteronomy with the reform. I am more persuaded by the 'dissident' part of his analysis. And I do not think this leads to dreamy utopianism; rather, Deuteronomy leaves a legacy of powerful ideas which have made an impact on western political thought.

Gordon McConville, University of Gloucestershire

Paul K. Hooker, *First and Second Chronicles*, Westminster Bible Companion, Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001, 295 pp. (pbk).

This work belongs in the Westminster Bible Companion series, which is "intended to help the laity of the church read the Bible more clearly and intelligently" (p. ix). It is directed to those who have not engaged in theological education and is meant to answer questions about historical and geographical details, words that are obscure or pregnant with meaning; the fundamental meaning of a passage; and connections to the contemporary world – apparently a Western, Protestant world. Due to the nature of the series, the reader is given few resources for further study. This work provides no index, no illustrations, almost no attributions, and only a brief bibliography.

The commentary portion is preceded by a succinct, and sufficient, thirteen-page introduction to the Books of Chronicles. Hooker sets out the general range of major scholarly discussions and is admirably cautious about taking positions that go beyond the evidence. He does leave out, though, discussion about whether or not the current ending of 2 Chronicles is original. Most importantly, Hooker skillfully leads the lay reader into historiographical concerns: how "the principal thrust of the work is not merely historical," but "provides a continuity between the storied past of his [the Chronicler's] nation and the present predicament of his people" (p. 10). Hooker discusses how the ancient world, unlike the modern world, did not divide history and theology (p. 13). He introduces the theological messages that the Chronicler wished to communicate to his audience as he retold the history of Israel through his later perspective. Still, I wish Hooker would have offered a critique of modern historiography and its bias against divine intervention that ultimately rejects the Chronicler's message and prevents one from reading Chronicles as Scripture.

The commentary portion then moves section by section, with some introductory and summary remarks for major sections. The NRSV is the basis for the interpretation and precedes the comments on each section in whole or excerpted form. Nonetheless, Hooker has relied on the Hebrew text to inform his comments and to lead him in places to suggest alternative translations of words and passages (e.g., p. 136). Hooker's work is strong historically. In his work, he provides very helpful explanatory comments about the background of Israelite history, often reminding the reader about information found in other biblical books. He describes the sociological setting of the Chronicler and the way in which the concerns of his day would have guided his narrative. He illumines some of the technical aspects of the Temple cultus portrayed in Chronicles

and tries to help the reader visualize the situation by comparing the size of the temple to a modern ranch-style house, and comparing the temple's architectural importance to that of European cathedrals. Although the work is not overtly homiletical, Hooker provides several comments on the current theological applicability of Chronicles.

One methodological issue that repeatedly arises involves source and text-critical problems. Hooker states in his introduction that he will assume the narrative of Samuel and Kings to be the principle source and will assume that diverging material is "either the creation of the Chronicler or preserved by him in an effort to advance his theological agenda" (p. 12). His actual work is less cautious. One finds that Hooker usually assumes that Samuel-Kings as we now have it is the verbatim source and that virtually all differences are creative alterations and additions. His commentary is therefore guided by noting detailed differences and by drawing conclusions about how the Chronicler altered various details in order to promote his theological agenda. The difference in text types for Samuel as attested by the Dead Sea Scrolls probably should lead to greater caution in this area. Still, each commentator has to take a stand on these issues and then proceed with the resulting observations.

In conclusion, I found this work to be very strong, particularly in terms of providing historical and sociological explanatory information. It carries out well the objectives of the WBC series.

Rodney K. Duke, Appalachian State University

Steven S. Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, Interpretation, Louisville: John Knox, 2001, 252 pp.

The Interpretation series is written "to meet the needs of students, teachers, ministers, and priests for a contemporary expository commentary...a commentary which presents the integrated result of historical and theological work with the biblical text" (p. v). The form is expository, section-by-section essays that "deal with what the texts say and discern their meaning for faith and life" (p. v). This volume has no notes, illustrations or indices; however, there are numerous internal references to works provided in the bibliography.

Tuell's fourteen-page introduction adequately covers the main concerns. Here he sets the stage for an admirably cautious approach over source-critical issues. When comparing Chronicles to Samuel-Kings, rather than attributing every minor deviation from Samuel-Kings to the bias of the Chronicler, Tuell recognizes that some differences might be due to the Chronicler working with a different textual tradition. Also, rather than attributing all unique material to the Chronicler's invention, in each case Tuell evaluates whether the Chronicler seemed to be relying on historically accurate sources unknown to us or providing his own commentary.

One issue, over which Tuell was "fuzzy," was the genre of Chronicles. After relating how the Chronicler's work conformed to the ancient standards of historiography and how the Chronicler supplemented Samuel-Kings with some historically accurate sources, Tuell concludes that Chronicles is not history, but "Bible study." It is possibly



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the first of the genre of the "rewritten Bible," that supplements and interprets Scriptural narratives, as found in latter works such as Josephus' *The Antiquities of the Jews* (p. 7). Still, Tuell continues to call the Chronicler's work "history" in the following sections. Although his point about how Chronicles uses known tradition within a new interpretive framework is well taken, I would suggest that such is the characteristic of every retelling of history.

Both in the Introduction and throughout the commentary Tuell emphasizes the thesis that the Chronicler presents an emerging Bible piety. The "word of the Lord" always refers to the word of Scripture or to prophetic revelation, which itself generally has been written. "The purpose of life is to seek God, in the words of Scripture and in the worship of the temple" (p. 13).

In the commentary proper, Tuell's essays are based on the New Revised Standard Version, which is not duplicated for the reader. His work, however, ultimately goes back to the Hebrew and Greek texts. He makes comments on textual variants, the nature of the different manuscripts, and translation alternatives to the NRSV.

Much work lies behind this commentary. Tuell interacts with a wide range of biblical scholarship on Chronicles and brings forth relevant interaction on the levels of textual criticism, source criticism, form and structure, historical assessment, and sociological background. At the same time, he provides comments on the level of contemporary theological application. On the level of application, Tuell often brings in points of connection to church hymnody. These points of contact illustrate one of the Chronicler's themes that Tuell stresses: God's presence is encountered not just in the Jerusalem temple per se, but particularly when Israel sincerely carries out the temple worship. Tuell's work is strong in describing and explaining the cultic material of Chronicles. He notes that the work of priests in the temple cultus is given a prophetic standing. In connection with this theme is another strength of Tuell's commentary, his treatment of the Israelite hymnic material (psalms) that is found in Chronicles.

The form of the commentary is its greatest weakness. It was difficult to read, because the many levels of exposition are not presented separately. Moreover, the reflections on theological application are rather sporadic. Different readers will probably come to the commentary with different interests and questions at different times. Were issues of the text, the background, and theological reflection separated in the formal structure of the work, readers could more easily find information on matters of their concern. Still, the strength of the wealth of expository information well outweighs this weakness.

Rodney K. Duke, Appalachian State University



Tremper Longman. *Song of Songs* (NICOT). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001. 238 pp.

Roland E. Murphy and Elizabeth Huwiler, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (New International Bible Commentary Series). Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999. ISBN 0-85364-733-X. 312 pp.

Carey Ellen Walsh, *Exquisite Desire: Religion, the Erotic, and the Song of Songs*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000. 245 pp.

Roger N. Whybray, *The Book of Proverbs: A Survey of Modern Study*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995. 184 p.

The present review offers observations concerning the NIBC volume encompassing Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, then turns to the Longman and Walsh works on Song of Songs. A final paragraph returns again to Proverbs as it considers Whybray's survey of modern scholarship on Proverbs.

Murphy's seasoned insights leave their indelible mark on the Proverbs portion of the NIBC volume. Consistent with brevity characterizing the NIBC design, this work reads more swiftly than Murphy's single-volume Word Biblical Commentary on Proverbs. Consequently it lacks much of the depth he was able to present there. Nevertheless, his enviable grasp of wisdom themes make his remarks in NIBC some of the best I believe, in short format.

In a clear, concise study of Ecclesiastes (NIBC), Huwiler concludes that just as Qohelet struggled to find meaning in life, so one should not be surprised when a quest to discern form and meaning in the composition itself may leave one with a sense of inconclusive struggle (p. 169). While this may be the case, yet I found myself dissatisfied with the extent of insights offered here. Perhaps a publisher's constraints prevented Huwiler from expanding as she would have liked on this profoundly rich and intentionally enigmatic wisdom composition. Murphy's counsel for sapiential reading may have proved particularly fruitful in Ecclesiastes: we must read "with the expectation that the meaning that seems 'obvious' to us may be merely a superficial reaction on our part....;" we must "allow ourselves to be 'caught' by mystery and questioning" (from his Proverbs portion of NIBC, p. 14).

The Song of Songs segment in NIBC is also contributed by Huwiler. In an extensive and highly informative introduction she provides noteworthy contributions under themes including repetitions and their function, song, theology, and human sexuality, as well as addressing more usual topics (e.g., form, unity, genre, canonization). Comments on the text itself are more extensive than those offered for Ecclesiastes. Concerning the complex issue of unity, Huwiler views Song of Songs as possessing a measure of what may be called narrative unity, albeit plagued by significant gaps (p. 236).

Another treatment of Song of Songs comes from Longman in his NICOT volume. He presents thorough yet readable discussion of customary introductory topics

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(e.g., authorship, style, language, date), with a convenient guide to features of Hebrew poetry. But it is "the history of interpretation" which dominates the opening pages (40% of the introduction)—a true treasure for any wishing to learn how the synagogue and church have treated this evocative book. Concerning unity, while characterizing Song of Songs as an anthology of love poems, Longman, like Huwiler, detects a measure of progression as the composition unfolds (p. 56). When commenting on the text itself, Longman seeks to bring to light all layers of potential meaning latent in poetic symbolism. While at times such an approach may fall prey to reading more into the text than the poet intended, at least the interpretive options are clearly before us, enabling us to decide for ourselves what may have been meant.

*Exquisite Desire* by Walsh is not so much a commentary on Song of Songs, as it is rather a collection of essays inspired by Song of Songs. By "collection" I do not imply that they are disjointed, belatedly collected. Her intent was "to demonstrate just what this ancient Hebrew Song can teach us about desire" (p. 3). A gifted writer with an engaging style, Walsh ponders the concept of desire, biblically conceived. Rather than examining each potential double meaning, she explores issues such as whether the composition is pornographic or erotic, concluding that it was intended as wholesome erotica (p. 45). This Walsh welcomes as a balance to the Bible's customary veiled references to physical love. Resources Walsh draws upon range beyond the linguistic and Ancient Near Eastern compositions customary for commentaries. Though an informed biblical scholar, she is also at home holding the Song in conversation with a wide range of material, from Bruce Springsteen to sadomasochism. A closing chapter turns from literal interpretation to explore the Song as an allegory of spiritual yearning. While *Exquisite Desire* is indeed a creative exploration of themes arising from the Song, it does not satisfy my longing for illumination of the biblical text.

In *The Book of Proverbs: A Survey of Modern Study*, seasoned wisdom-scholar Whybray assembles what is essentially an annotated bibliography of works treating the Book of Proverbs. The period under review is the 20<sup>th</sup> century. While not exhaustive, it still is very comprehensive. Resources are organized thematically, whether treating issues of origins and background, literary and structural matters of particular chapters, ideas and theology, dating, or text and versions. As a bibliographic resource, this volume will provide indispensable aid for research in Proverbs.

Paul Overland

J.J. Collins & P.W. Flint, ed., *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, Vols. 1 & 2. SVT 83, 1&2. Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2001. Vol. 1, xxii + 292 pp; Vol. 2, xxiv + 482 pp cloth Hb US \$275.00 ISBN 90 04 12202 8 (set).

This two-volume book is the second in the series 'The Formation and Interpretation of Old Testament Literature', the purpose of which is, 'to examine and explore the prehistory, contents and themes of the books of the Old Testament, as well as their reception in later Jewish and Christian literature' (preface). It contains thirty-two

essays (fourteen in Vol. 1 and eighteen in Vol. 2) by leading scholars from Europe, Israel and North America.

Volume 1 is divided into four parts. In the first there are two general essays. J.J. Collins provides a brief, but useful, orientation to 'Current Issues in the Study of Daniel'. M.A. Knibb discusses the relationship of the MT of Daniel to other 'Danielic' material in the LXX and from Qumran. As he points out, all the texts from Qumran, other than the *Prayer of Nabonidus*, seem to presuppose the existence of the Book of Daniel. He too readily accepts the common view that the *Prayer* 'represents an earlier form of the tradition contained in Daniel 4' (p. 24). There is also a brief discussion of some fairly recently published sapiential texts from Qumran Cave 4 which bring together wisdom and prophecy.

The second part has three essays dealing with 'Daniel in its Near Eastern Milieu'. In each case the 'milieu' is Mesopotamian. K. Van der Torn is sceptical of the historicity of the stories in Daniel 1-6. His argument that the story of Daniel in the lions' den is based on the plot of the Babylonian wisdom text *I shall praise the Lord of Wisdom*, taking its metaphorical reference to 'a pit of lions' literally, does not convince this reviewer. S.M. Paul discusses some 'noticeable linguistic, philological, and typological Mesopotamian imprints' (p. 55) in Daniel 1-6. J.H. Walton argues that the author of Daniel 7 makes use of topoi, motifs and patterns from several ancient Near Eastern 'combat myths'. The result is not a 'haphazard patchwork quilt' but a composition in which he has creatively transformed this material to express 'his own theological will and purpose' (p. 88).

Part Three contains four essays on 'Issues in Interpretation of Specific Passages'. R.G. Kratz presents his own reconstruction of the process of growth of the book through the addition in stages of the visions to Daniel 1-6. His methodology of detecting 'glosses' as clues to the process is questionable. However, he does draw attention to interesting interconnections between the stories and the visions. A. Lacocque, unlike Walton, argues that most of the imagery in Daniel 7 is of Canaanite origin, rather than Mesopotamian. The essay on the resurrection of the dead in Daniel 12:1-4a by E. Haag is in German. J.W. van Henten discusses allusions to Daniel 3 & 6 in early Christian literature.

For this reviewer Part Four is the most interesting in the first volume. The common theme of its five essays is the social setting of the Book of Daniel. R. Albertz gives an interesting, but speculative, discussion of the socio-political context of possible stages in the growth of the book of Daniel. A study of the 'belief system' of Daniel 7-12 is S. Beyerles' way in to identifying the social setting of these apocalyptic visions. He identifies the apocalyptists with the *maskilim* of Daniel 11:33-35, whom he sees as a highly educated elite and observers of the Torah. P.R. Davies argues that the *maskilim* are the authors of the whole book. He repeats his earlier demolition of attempts to identify them with other known groups in pre-Hasmonean Judaism. In his view they originated in the diaspora but, like most scholars, he simply assumes that the interest shown in the Jerusalem temple in chs. 8-11 is evidence that they moved to Judah. It is not obvious why Jews in the diaspora could not have been as passionate in their concern for Jerusalem and the temple as those in Judah. Nehemiah is an example of one who



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was. Davies suggests that the successors of the *maskilim* may have been among the Qumran community. L.L. Grabbe attributes the final form of the Book of Daniel to an educated, aristocratic Jew *ca.* 168-165 BCE. He tentatively mentions the historian Eupolemus as a possible candidate. Many scholars have read the visions in Daniel in a 'political' way as 'opposition literature'. D.L. Smith-Christopher argues for the same approach to the stories. His argument rightly draws attention to the 'confrontation' between divine and human power but seems overdone. There is a more positive attitude to pagan powers in the stories as compared with the visions. However, the difference should not be over-pressed. In both parts of the book the stress is on the sovereignty of the Most High over human sovereigns, whose arrogance leads to their downfall. The difference in ethos in the visions as compared to the stories is the result of the difference of degree in the arrogance of the 'small horn' as compared with earlier rulers.

Volume 2 contains Parts 5 - 8 of the combined work. Part Five consists of six essays on the 'Literary Context' of the Book of Daniel. The first, by J.-W. Wesselius, argues that the book was deliberately composed to appear to be an 'ancient dossier' of material about Daniel. Less convincing is his claim that it is patterned on the Book of Ezra. Material from Qumran plays a large part in each of the other five essays. While discussing 'The Solar Calendars of Daniel and Enoch' G. Boccaccini makes interesting suggestions about the possible meaning of the perplexing dates in Dan. 8:14, 9:27 & 12:11-12.. P.W. Flint provides a useful survey of the non-biblical 'Danielic' material from Qumran. Similarities between the throne visions of Daniel 7 and the Book of Giants suggests to L.T. Stuckenbruck that they rely on a common tradition which the two works develop in different ways. E. Eshel's brief discussion of 'Possible Sources of the Book of Daniel' doesn't really add much to what Flint and Stuckenbruck say. J.F. Hobbins discusses the concept of life after death as it appears in the Enochic literature, the Book of Jubilees, a work called The Words of Ezekiel and Daniel. He too readily assumes that Dan. 12:3 implies an existence in heaven rather than a transformed existence on earth.

Part Six contains six essays on the Book of Daniel's 'Reception in Judaism and Christianity'. K. Koch argues that the book was received as 'canonical' at different times within different Jewish and Christian groups around the turn of the era. A fascinating essay by C. Rowland examines the use Daniel's imagery as a 'lens' through which to interpret contemporary political contexts. He uses as examples the radical Reformer Thomas Muentzer, the 'Digger' leader Gerrard Winstanley and the artist and poet William Blake. The essay on Daniel's 'fourth kingdom' in targumic literature by U. Glessmer is in German. C.A. Evans explores the influence of Daniel on the concept of the kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus and Paul. The significance of Dan. 7:13 for understanding the 'son of man' sayings in the Gospels is a hotly debated issue, and J.D.G. Dunn provides a helpful survey of the debate and assessment of the main scholarly positions. His own conclusion is that Jesus himself drew upon Daniel 7 in attempting to articulate his own sense of mission and destiny. M. Henze provides interesting examples of different interpretations of Dan. 4 in Syriac literature.



The three essays on the theme of 'Textual History' in Part Seven are all rather technical and will be mainly of interest to specialists in this area. E. Ulrich discusses the Daniel scrolls from Qumran. The Greek texts of Daniel are dealt with by A.A. Di Lella, and K.D. Jenner discusses the Syriac texts.

Part Eight is on 'The Theology of Daniel'. J. Goldingay has some thought-provoking things to say about the understanding of the sovereignty of God in the Book of Daniel, as does J. Barton on 'Theological Ethics in Daniel'. The essay on the meaning of 'the Abomination of Desolation' by J. Lust is helpful, and his interpretation of it may well be right, but the essay sits a bit oddly beside the other two in this Part.

Volume 2 ends with cumulative bibliographies and indices.

This is a valuable collection of essays on a wide variety of aspects of the study of the Book of Daniel. The Editors do not specify the readership for which it is intended. Some of the essays would serve as introductions to particular areas of study. Others are quite specialist. Scholars and more advanced students with a particular interest in the Book of Daniel will find it an important resource book.

Ernest Lucas Bristol Baptist College, England.

Peter D. Quinn-Miscall, *Reading Isaiah: Poetry and Vision*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. vii + 224 pp., paper, \$19.95.

If one is looking for a stimulating and fresh approach to the Book of Isaiah, *Reading Isaiah: Poetry and Vision* by Peter D. Quinn-Miscall is worth a close read. Taking a decidedly rhetorical and literary perspective, Quinn-Miscall offers a selective study of Isaiah's "grand poem" (p. 1). His working supposition is that Isaiah is a poem providing a "retrospective on Israel's history" (p. 3), not a progressive representation of Israel's history. Isaiah presents a vision, an imaginative ideal, of God's ways with humanity and the world for all times and places. The vision is not intended to be tied to the actual time periods presented in Isaiah. Rather, the historical events and characters are simply concrete images employed in dramatic fashion to communicate a timeless message. Therefore the reader is compelled to imagine "a dream world, that never existed but that is filled with the possibility of what might be" (p. 20).

Quinn-Miscall's literary reading of Isaiah allows the spotlight to shine on the unity and literary nature of the text instead of getting mired in common historical-critical issues. Reading Isaiah as a unified work, he sets out to expose features of the text by comparing and contrasting their respective appearances throughout the sixty-six chapters. The first chapter of the book provides a summary and breakdown of the major sections of Isaiah. The next four chapters reflect an astute analysis of some of the text's theological subjects, effective use of images, intertextuality, and conceptual repetition. Quinn-Miscall's presentation pays special attention to three specific literary categories, "themes," "imagery," and "characters," in appraising the content of Isaiah. In the Introduction, he also includes a discussion of other important factors that play a role in understanding and interpreting Isaiah.

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Though Quinn-Miscall exemplifies how fruitful a literary approach can be for understanding a biblical text, his denial that Isaiah intends, at least peripherally, to communicate a message about Israel's history seems to be an interpretive liability in two ways. First, it forces unnecessary interpretive dichotomies which are reflected in broad statements throughout his book. For example, Quinn-Miscall notes, "Isaiah does not usually develop aspects in progressive fashion but repeats and expands them (p. 5); Isaiah is not trying to describe an actual world, present or past, but an ideal world (p. 20); Isaiah wants little to do with actual kings, but he is impressed with their grand claims to divine establishment and to the wonderful society that they will rule (p. 172)." Second, reading Isaiah as simply a "simultaneous panorama" (p. 5) deflates the developmental significance of images within the time sensitive story of Isaiah. For instance, he notes that "Isaiah's vision of God and humanity (whether all nations or only Israel) and the many relationships that can exist between them is the same in his closing and opening chapters" (p. 5).

By eliminating the dynamic of referential history and its rhetorical progression in the drama of Isaiah, the interpreter cuts out part of what makes Isaiah such a moving theological message; namely, that God carries out his will with his people in real historical time. Ironically, Isaiah deliberately communicates this point about God's actions in and through real history *in a literary fashion* by implementing historical information within pivotal sections of the drama. Thus, observing the literary play of real historical dimensions in Isaiah's multifaceted, prophetic message doesn't hinder Quinn-Miscall's literary perspective, but rather contributes to it.

In the end, *Reading Isaiah: Poetry and Vision* has more strengths than weaknesses. Quinn-Miscall's limited view of the role of history in Isaiah's message should not deter one from using his work to gain valuable insight into the literary qualities of the text. This book is a useful study aid for the Isaiah student of any level.

Steven D. Mason, St. Mary's College, University of St. Andrews

M. Daniel Carroll R. *Amos—The Prophet & His Oracles: Research on the Book of Amos*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002. 224 pp., paper, \$32.95.

The emergence of new social scientific and literary methods for biblical scholarship has opened numerous venues for understanding the culture and history of Ancient Israel. In *Amos—The Prophet & His Oracles: Research on the Book of Amos*, M. Daniel Carroll R. explores the impact of modern methodologies on the field of Amos studies. In order to offer a comprehensive picture of modern methodologies, Carroll provides a survey of scholarship related to Amos, which begins with the late nineteenth century and extends to the twenty-first century. In his survey Carroll not only provides information about major theoretical trends and models (i.e. Form / Tradition Criticism, Social Science approaches, reading from the margins, etc.), he also offers reflections on their implications as well as responses to them from other scholars. One of Carroll's main

conclusions about trends in Amos scholarship is that no model is able to meet the needs of a global church; therefore there is a need for diversity in methodology.

In relation to the structure of Carroll's book, one should note that the work is divided into two main sections: first, a history of Amos research from the 1870s to 2000 and second, bibliographies related to Amos research. Carroll's intention in writing *Amos—The Prophet & His Oracles* is not to formulate a central hypothesis and test it, but rather to offer a catalogue of numerous hypotheses that could assist students of the book of Amos. Carroll's collection and presentation of materials related to Amos studies is pertinent and exhaustive.

The first section of Carroll's book allows a newcomer to Amos studies to acquaint him or herself with the theoretical trends that dominate the field. The second section of Carroll's work enables the reader to develop a deeper knowledge of specific topics like: historical background, composition, textual criticism, theology, use of covenant, pastoral use, etc. It is important to mention that Carroll writes from an Evangelical perspective, however his discussion of reading from the margins offers ideas and suggestions that are not conventionally mentioned in the Evangelical scholarship of developed countries.

Carroll suggests that poverty and injustice, two prominent themes in the book of Amos, are particularly relevant for readers in developing countries (pp. 53-54). For many in the developing world, socio-economic marginalization has created conditions that enable them to relate to themes in Amos in ways that the traditional and/or affluent reader cannot. Carroll's inclusion of "reading from the margins" increases the potential for broader thinking in relation to this prophetic book and informs the reader of its relevance.

*Amos—The Prophet & His Oracles* offers an invaluable foundation in Amos studies and also an inspiring cross-cultural vision for future scholarship. Carroll's work is an excellent reference tool for all levels of Amos scholarship, particularly for those scholars seeking fresh perspectives from around the world and pastors seeking devotional material that unifies Christian commitment and social service.

Jacob D. Dodson

David A. deSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002, 428pp., cloth.

If you have only one book on the Apocrypha, this is the one to have. This work contains not only introductory materials to the Apocrypha but it also serves as an excellent commentary. Fully informed by contemporary scholarship, the author provides and engaging presentation of the content. It is suggested that the reader proceed with Dr. deSilva's book in one hand and a copy of the Apocrypha in the other. That is the best way to get the most out of this informative, valuable and edifying material.

In fluent prose, the author states his three reasons for studying the Apocrypha. First, it gives a full and reliable picture of Judaism from 200 B.C.E. to 100 C. E. Secondly the authors of the New Testament show familiarity with the Apocrypha. Thirdly, the Apocrypha was formative for early Christian theology. From other parts of

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the work, it is evident that there are many additional reasons for studying the Apocrypha. 1. The Apocrypha serves as a witness to the faith of the Jewish people during 200 B.C.E. to 100 C.E. 2. A background is provided in the Apocrypha for understanding the Judaism of Jesus' day. 3. A contribution is made by this literature to the discussion of theodicy. 4. Ecumenically, a study of the Apocrypha can assist Christians in moving past some of the barriers that separate them. (Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Protestant). 5. Some of the Christian greats who admired the Apocrypha were Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, Jerome and Augustine.

Chapter One serves as a very helpful introduction dealing with value, identification, general content, origin and a extended, valuable section on the relation of the Apocrypha and the canon. The reader is also assisted in differentiating between Apocrypha, deuterocanonical, canonical, protocanonical and pseudepigrapha.

Next, the author moves to a discussion of the "Historical Context." Decisively and concisely Jewish history from 200 B.C.E. to 100 C.E. is treated. This material is an edifying, comprehensive record of the historical events of the period dealing with Hellenism, the Maccabean Revolt, Roman Rule and Jews in the Diaspora.

The remainder of the work is a book by book treatment of the Apocrypha. Thoroughness and quality is evident as the author sets forth concise summary of the book followed by an analysis of the structure and contents. Then he moves to "Textual Transmission," "Author, Date and Setting," then "Genre and Purpose," "Formative Influence," "Value for Intertestamental Judaism," and concludes with a section on theology. Each of the twenty books comprising the Apocrypha receive this comprehensive, scholarly treatment. Added benefits of this work include fifteen pages of reference materials to the Apocrypha, an index to authors, a nine page index to subjects and a twenty page "Index to Scripture and Other Ancient Writings." Included in this last section are the Apocrypha, Old Testament, New Testament, Sources, Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Jewish Sources, Christian Sources and Classical Sources. These alone are worth the price of the book for any serious student of the Apocrypha. No wonder others are saying, "This book is destined to become and remain the standard introduction to the Apocrypha for many years to come."

Richard E. Allison

Brad Eastman, *The Significance of Grace in the Letters of Paul*. New York: Peter Lang, 1999. 264 pp., cloth, \$51.95.

Originally a dissertation under the direction of Stephen Westerholm, this volume in Peter Lang's Studies in Biblical Literature series is an ambitious attempt to trace the significance of grace in the undisputed letters of Paul.

Brad Eastman positions his discussion of grace within the last quarter century's reevaluation of Paul and the law. He begins with a summary of the work of E.P. Sanders, H. Räisänen, J.D.G. Dunn, H. Hübner, S. Westerholm, and F. Thielman. His sympathies clearly lie with the direction taken by Westerholm and Thielman, in which a "plight to



solution" schema is still accepted with respect to law and grace. Nevertheless, Eastman does not limit his treatment of grace to that particular debate, wishing to set his examination of grace on the broadest exegetical and theological footing possible.

Eastman approaches his task by examining the undisputed books of Paul in roughly chronological order (1 Thess, 1 & 2 Cor, Gal, Rom, Phil). Proceeding on the assumption that grace "implies dependence on God as an answer to the human condition" (12), Eastman analyzes each book in terms of its portrayal of the human condition, dependence on God in the Christian life (initial and ongoing), and human responsibility.

Eastman is at his best in his treatment of the human condition. Though he is intent on examining grace in other than polemical contexts, he is strongest in his explication of the law, sin, and flesh in Paul's theology. His indebtedness to his dissertation advisor, S. Westerholm, is apparent in this regard, but this is only an advantage in the opinion of this reviewer. Eastman's monograph provides a sane and measured treatment of Paul and the law and is worth consulting on that basis alone.

Less satisfying is Eastman's decision to examine the significance of grace in Paul by focusing on "what may be expressed broadly as the notion of 'dependence on God' in Paul's letters" (10). Apart from his stated reasons that "'grace,' understood in a Christian sense, implies some sort of need or dependence" and that he himself thinks "it very clear that Paul believes humanity to be dependent on God's grace" (10), Eastman provides no rationale for characterizing grace ahead of time in this way and then proceeding on that assumption. Should not an examination of grace in Paul at least begin with an inductive study of Paul's use of *κα,ρις*? Perhaps then a less all-encompassing category (or even definition) might have been found. As it is, Eastman's organizing principle ("dependence on God") assumes what it needs to prove and subsumes what it needs to define. The result is a work whose very breadth obscures its focus.

Eastman's treatment of human responsibility also raises questions. Commendably, Eastman's book is marked by uncompromising descriptions of the extent and power of grace juxtaposed to equally strong assertions of human freedom and responsibility. Nevertheless, his constant reminders that grace does not bypass the human will and that humans are not purely passive instruments, irresistibly swept along in a larger current, make a straw man of the Reformed position he seems to oppose. In that interpretive tradition and understanding of grace, the human will is not bypassed; it is transformed—and in a way that enables a truly voluntary, spontaneous, and free human response. Nor is all grace irresistible on this view (hence the distinction between common and saving grace). Nor must one conclude from the presence of exhortations to faith and obedience and warnings against falling away in Paul that it is possible to frustrate God's grace. This is not to say that Eastman must agree with the Reformed view of grace in Paul. It is to wish, however, that he had engaged the issues in a more nuanced and sympathetic manner.

Nevertheless, there is much to appreciate in Eastman's treatment of Paul's thought. He provides a generally reliable guide to the gospel in Paul, from the human dilemma that provokes the question to the answer God provides in Christ for humanity. His book is packed with exegetical insight and detailed engagement with modern biblical

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scholarship. In many ways this book is a good guide to the main issues in Pauline studies and theology in a way that far exceeds its titular focus on grace.

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Gordon D. Fee, *To What End Exegesis? Essays Textual, Exegetical, and Theological*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001. X + 378 pp., paperback, \$26.00.

This volume brings together twenty-one articles written by Gordon Fee, one of the leading contemporary New Testament text critics, who currently teaches at Regent College. These were originally published in various journals, festschriften, and books over a period of twenty-five years (1976-2000). As the subtitle indicates, the book consists of essays dealing with textual (chapters 1-5), exegetical (chapters 6-12), and theological (chapters 13-21) issues. These essays are as follows: "One thing is Needful"? (Luke 10:42); "On the Inauthenticity of John 5:3b-4;" "On the Meaning of John 20:30-31;" "Textual-Exegetical Observations on 1 Corinthians 1:2, 2:21 and 2:10;" "On Text and Commentary on 1 and 2 Thessalonians;" "Once More—John 7:37-39;" "1 Corinthians 7:1 in the NIV;" "ΧΑΡΙΣ in 2 Corinthians 1:15: Apostolic Parousia and Paul-Corinth Chronology;" "Εἰδωλοθυτα Once Again: An Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 8-10;" "2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 and Food Offered to Idols," "Freedom and the Life of Obedience (Galatians 5:1-6:18);" "Philippians 2:5-11: Hymn or Exalted Pauline Prose?;" "Toward a Theology of 1 Corinthians;" "Christology and Pneumatology in Romans 8:9-11—and Elsewhere: Some Reflections on Paul as a Trinitarian;" "Another Gospel Which You Did Not Embrace": 2 Corinthians 11:4 and the Theology of 1 and 2 Corinthians;" "Some Exegetical and Theological Reflections on Ephesians 4:30 and Pauline Pneumatology;" "To What End Exegesis? Reflections on Exegesis and Spirituality in Philippians 4:10-20;" "Pneuma and Eschatology in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2: A Proposal about "Testing the Prophets" and the Purpose of 2 Thessalonians;" "Toward and Theology of 2 Timothy—from a Pauline Perspective;" "Paul and the Trinity: The Experience of Christ and the Spirit for Paul's Understanding of God;" and "Wisdom Christology in Paul: A Dissenting View."

These essays demonstrate why Fee is one of the most well respected New Testament scholars of our day. The reader sees how all areas of New Testament exegesis are supposed to be carried out, and why such careful exegesis matters.

David M. Phillips

Robert F. Fortna and Tom Thatcher (eds.), *Jesus in Johannine Tradition*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2001. Xviii + 381 pp., hardback, \$25.95

The late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries are an exciting time for Johannine studies. While the work of earlier scholars, especially Dodd, Brown, Bultmann and Martin, remain foundational, newer methodologies are opening questions and

providing results to challenge former consensus. Was John using oral or written sources? Was he in any way dependent upon the Synoptic tradition or the Synoptic gospels? What is John's relationship with non-canonical literature, including later Gnosis? Who constituted the "Johannine community? Was there such a self contained entity as the Johannine community? And, finally, how much of the life and sayings of the historical Jesus are retained in John's gospel? These are just a few of the questions raised in essays contained in *Jesus in the Johannine Tradition*.

The title is somewhat misleading, in that the focus is not these essays is not simply the question of the historical Jesus, but more focused on methodological issues. The essays are addressed to a general as well as scholarly audience, as seen by the conscious effort to restrict footnotes to a minimum. Nevertheless, the thirty essays in the book are written by acknowledged leaders in Johannine studies, and are informative and helpful to both the scholar and the neophyte.

The essays fall into three general categories: The Fourth Gospel and Jesus (pp. 11-111); The Fourth Evangelist's Sources (pp. 113-277); and The Fourth Gospel and Noncanonical Literature (pp. 279-352.) A conclusion (pp. 353-8) summarizes the results for the reader, and, along with the introduction, should be the first items read by those who are not familiar with the breadth of current Johannine scholarship. The one criticism of the book might be the lack of a coherent or over arching thematic unity in the essays. While they are collected under general headings, the reader may be confused by the fact that a multiplicity of methodologies is utilized, and that at times the results may be contradictory. For example, there are three essays on the "Signs Gospel," the hypothetical source behind the seven miracles found in Jn 2-11. The essays by Robert F. Fortna ("Jesus Tradition in the Signs Gospel, pp. 199-208), Tom Felton and Tom Thatcher ("Stylometry and the Signs Gospel," pp. 209-218) and Sara C. Winter ("Little Flags: The Scope and Reconstruction of the Signs Gospel," pp. 219-235) all affirm the existence of a written signs source. Joanna Dewey's work with oral tradition ("The Gospel of John in its Oral-Written Media World," pp.239-252), however, casts doubt on the probability and possibility of the existence of a separate signs source. For those familiar with the state of the questions of Johannine research, such disagreements are to be expected, but may be disconcerting to those less familiar with the state of the current debate.

Nevertheless, despite, or perhaps because, of wide range of interests and methodologies represented, *Jesus in the Johannine Tradition* represents a valuable contribution for a wide variety of readers. For those unfamiliar with the questions of current Johannine research, the essays provide a quick introduction into the difficult, if not confusing, world of Johannine scholarship. For those with more intimate acquaintance with the scholarly debates, it will be a ready reference to provide quick reference to a multiplicity of approaches to this, perhaps, most difficult of the gospels, which, as is often said, provides waters in which "a child may wade, and an elephant swim."

Russell Morton

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Michael D. Goulder, *Paul and the Competing Mission in Corinth*. Library of Pauline Studies. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001. 320 pp, paper, \$24.95

In an expansion and elaboration of an earlier work, *St. Paul Versus St. Peter: A Tale of Two Missions* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), Goulder seeks to revitalize the hypothesis of Ferdinand Christian Baur, that the conflicts Paul faced in Corinth reflected the broader competition between two competing missions. On the one hand, there was the Gentile mission, represented by Paul. In opposition to Paul's mission were Jerusalem based missionaries, whose loyalty was to Peter. These two strains of Christianity came into conflict, the resulting in the second century church, which Baur referred to as "early catholicism." While not adopting Baur's complete hypothesis, especially the Hegelian overtones, Goulder asserts that Baur was essentially correct in his hypothesis of two competing missions in Corinth.

The book opens with a chapter entitled "Gods Ascending" (pp. 1-15), which outlines the major points of Baur's hypothesis, and Goulder's reasons for accepting it. What follows is detailed analysis of various themes to marshal evidence to support the theory. The analysis is followed by five appendices, discussing issues such as the integrity of 2 Corinthians, acts of power, and newer critical approaches.

Goulder's hypothesis may be summed up as stating that the Peterine mission represents a pre-Pauline wisdom oriented Christianity. Its representatives arrived in Corinth after Paul left the city. Their wisdom teaching basically held that Jesus was a prophet of God's message, anointed by the Holy Spirit, but not God's unique son. In this respect, they were similar to the later Ebionites, condemned by Irenaeus. This wisdom teaching combined visionary elements, as well as sexual asceticism. Their visionary experiences enable the Peterine missionaries to have a relaxed attitude toward idol meat, which Paul opposes in 1 Cor. 8.

Nevertheless, the rigor of the Peterines led to some unintended consequences. One is the incestuous relationship of 1 Cor. 5. Goulder hypothesizes that the people involved in the relationship were prominent members of the community. The "peccadilloes" of the couple were overlooked since they not able to adhere the expected asceticism of the group and their financial support was vital to the group (p. 123). The same attitude prevails in marginal religious sects today. Paul, however, is outraged, and calls on the church to "hand this one over to Satan" (1 Cor. 5:5). The treatment worked, and after a period of repentance, Paul recommends the person be admitted back into the community in 2 Cor. 2:5-11.

The Peterines were able to assert their superiority to Paul in two areas. One is that they had credentials going back to Peter and, by implication, to Jesus himself. Paul, on the other hand, could in no way be considered an apostle, and lacked the necessary apostolic credentials, including personally following Jesus. Second, the Peterines could point to the works of power accomplished by Peter and themselves, including visions. Paul does not have these credentials. Even in 2 Cor. 12:1-5, Paul has to boast of the visions of another, Pauline Christian. "Paul himself never had such a vision" (p. 105).



Goulder is not hesitant to place himself in the minority opinion of NT scholarship. In particular, his assertion that the person of 2 Cor. 2:5-11 and 1 Cor. 5 are identical, denying that the visionary of 2 Cor. 12:1-5 is Paul, or in maintaining the unity of 2 Corinthians. His idea that the opposition to Paul represents a unified group is elegant and simple. It has much that is attractive. Yet, the very elegance of Goulder's hypothesis is its undoing. While it provides for a simple explanation regarding the conflicts between Paul and the Corinthian Christians, human relationships may seldom be explained in the simple terms of physics. Indeed, in a cosmopolitan, dynamic city such as First Century Corinth, it would not be surprising if Paul found it necessary to address issues arising from several fronts, including the arrival of missionaries from Jerusalem who derided his abilities, apostleship and mission, as in 2 Cor. 3-4; 10-13. Although a simple explanation would be preferable, the interactions between Paul and the Corinthian Church defy such a unified solution.

Despite these caveats, Goulder's work deserves attention. It is always good to have our assumptions challenged, and Goulder does so in an artful and stimulating fashion. While we may not agree to all his solutions, he brings us back to some of the most vexing questions about the Corinthian correspondence, and Paul's relationship with Christian believers in Corinth. For this he is to be commended.

Russell Morton

Andreas J. Köstenberger. *Studies on John and Gender: A Decade of Scholarship*. Studies in Biblical Literature 38. New York: Peter Lang, 2001. 378 pp., hardback, \$67.95.

Andreas Köstenberger is well known within Johannine scholarship. From his doctoral dissertation onwards he has been researching and widely publishing in the Gospel of John. With the exception of chapter three, this volume is a collection of some of his previous essays on the Fourth Gospel published between 1991 and 2000, hence the subtitle: "A Decade of Scholarship."

The book is divided into two parts. The first part deals various issues in Johannine studies, chapters 1-8. Chapter one discusses the primary introductory issues of the Fourth Gospel: historical setting, literary features, and the theological emphases found in John. Chapter two incorporates research in the precursors of critical scholarship on John's Gospel, focusing on the period from 1790 to 1810. Chapter three, the only essay not published elsewhere, compares the Gospel accounts of Jesus' anointing with the application of verbal aspect theory. Chapters four and five are two detailed studies on important Johannine themes: Jesus as a rabbi and the Johannine "signs." Chapter six deals specifically with the reference to "greater works" of the believer found in John 14:12. Chapter seven is a lexical study of the two primary Johannine verbs for sending. Finally, chapter eight discusses a Johannine biblical theology of mission, flowing from Köstenberger's published dissertation.

The second part of the book deals specifically with various issues in reference to gender, chapters 9-15. Chapter nine offers a critical review of the thesis that priestly celibacy is of apostolic origin. Chapter ten investigates whether or not the reference to

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"mystery" indeed relates to the sacrament of marriage. Chapter eleven offers hermeneutical method in the study of gender roles in the New Testament. The next three chapters, twelve to fourteen, deal specifically with the crucial passage on gender: 1 Timothy 2:9-15. Finally, chapter fifteen offers a comprehensive analysis of women in the Pauline mission.

Although this collection of essays is clearly intended for an evangelical audience, "scholars who disagree with Köstenberger's arguments will at the same time find his scholarship engaging." Köstenberger is upfront about combining the work of scholarship with the work of the church. This volume combines a good example of biblical exegesis with a theological reading of the text taken from the evangelical tradition. Köstenberger's detailed exegetical work in specific pericopae provides an example for all to follow. In part one, Köstenberger covers some of the most important issues in the study of the Fourth Gospel. That alone provides an excellent survey of the issues in Johannine studies over the last decade. In part two, Köstenberger is unafraid to deal with potentially the most difficult issue in the church today: gender. Dealing with both Catholic and Protestant exegesis, Köstenberger tackles some of the most pressing pericopae in the entire discussion of gender. Part two provides both a survey of important issues and passages, as well a humble presentation of one option within the evangelical tradition.

*Studies on John and Gender: A Decade of Scholarship* would be a valuable addition to all students of John. But this book's most valuable contribution may be to those who are attempting to deal with the issue of gender in both the academy and the church. Although Köstenberger's answer may not be agreed upon by all, his attempt to break the impasse and deal with the difficult pericopae is an excellent example to follow.

Edward W. Klink III

Jon Laansma, *I Will Give You Rest: The Rest Motif in the New Testament with Special Reference to Mt 11 and Heb 3-4*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe 98. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997. 459 pp., hardcover, \$ 84 00.

Originally presented in dissertation form to the University of Aberdeen in January of 1995, "no attempt was made to update the discussion" for its publication in 1997. This book examines the background and significance of the rest motif in the New Testament with special attention directed to Matthew 11 and Hebrews 3-4 (p. 2). In eight extremely well defined chapters (366 pp.), Laansma systematically examines (1) the Old Testament and extra-biblical material (both Jewish and Christian); (2) the theological, practical, and literary interests of both the authors; as well as (3) the modern discussion surrounding Matthew 11:28-30 and Hebrews 3:7-4:11 (pp. 14-16, 359).

In a direct and succinct manner, chapter one, "Matthew 11,28-30 and Hebrews 3-4 in Modern Discussion" (16 pp.), surveys the prevailing presuppositions of the rest motif in Matthew 11 and Hebrews 3-4 and then offers a prospectus for his book. First, Laansma surfaces the neglect among scholars concerning the rest motif in Matthew 11.

He rightly observes, "the chief interest of scholars in examining the rest motif has been to establish that Jesus speaks as Wisdom, with only a secondary interest (if any) in the rest motif as a soteriological symbol" (pp. 2-9). Second, he presents what he considers the controlling debate between Kasemann and Hofius over *καταπαυσις*, and notes, "In most cases the participants in the discussion have been concerned with the larger question of the religious historical background of Hebrews as a whole." As a result the "schools have tended to polarize the options," which raises the need for this study (pp. 10-13). Finally he outlines the content of his book. He emphasizes in his prospectus, however, that though both Matthew 11 and Hebrews 3-4 speak to the theme of rest; "It is not our purpose to harmonize these two passages nor to establish a definite link between them" (pp. 14-16), an intention Laansma honors.

Chapter two, "The Rest Motif in the Hebrew OT" (59 pp.), is divided into two parts. First, Laansma reveals the rest tradition as it is "anchored" in the Deuteronomistic history (Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings), followed by Chronicles, Psalm 132, Psalm 95, Isaiah 11, 14, 28, 32, 63, 66; Jeremiah 6, 31, 50; Lamentations 1, 2; and Micah 2. After isolating and studying key terms (נוח [Hiphil] and cognate noun מנוחה), he identifies several motifs that cluster around the concept of rest (e.g., the land, the temple, the Davidic kingship, and weariness). Then he examines the rest motif in relation to the cultic institution of Sabbath rest with God's Sabbath rest. Here he distinguishes between the institution of Sabbath rest as a humanitarian concern for the physical relief and God's Sabbath rest. In addition, Laansma does not mix YHWH's rest in the temple with YHWH's post-creation rest event. In conclusion, Laansma muses, "*The rest tradition is a very prominent OT redemptive category* which was incorporated into Israel's eschatological hopes." "As for God's Sabbath rest," Laansma argues, "it may bear implication for Israel's Sabbath, but it was probably addressed more directly to the subject of creation . . . than to the Sabbath institution as such."

Moving beyond the OT, Laansma interacts with extra biblical material in chapters three, "The Rest Motif in the LXX" (25 pp.), and chapter four, "The Rest Motif in Other Jewish and Christian Literature" with an adjoining appendix: "Rest in Gnostic Mythology" (56 pp.). Tracing the usage of key terms in the LXX (words with *ἀναπαυ-* and *καταπαυ-* stems), Laansma observes little change in the rest tradition with respect to those passages considered in chapter two. Passages unique to the LXX, however, "push outward the bounds of the rest tradition" (p. 88) thereby suggesting that "this was a *living tradition*" (p. 101). With regard to the Sabbath, terminological overlap offers some reason to merge the rest tradition with the Sabbath (esp. Duet. 5:14), but it does not actually connect the two concepts. Laansma does identify, however, the development of the concept in the wisdom literature whereby "The result of living wisely – equivalent to living righteously, to acquiring wisdom, to studying Torah – is 'rest' in the shape of this-worldly tranquillity and possibly prosperity" (p. 94). The special attention given to *ἀναπαυσις* and *καταπαυσις* reveals the propensity to associate "rest" closely with the temple. In its local usage (Deut. 1:9; 2 Par. 6:4; Ps. 131:8, 14), however, "rest" is *not* to be viewed as a technical term for the temple (contra Hofius, pp. 99-100). Chapter four and its appendix also exhibit excellent discussions on extra-biblical material.



Leaving the survey of the OT and other Jewish and Christian literature, Laansma launches his NT study in chapter five, "Mt 11:28-30 and Matthew's Wisdom Christology" (49 pp.). In this chapter, Laansma moves beyond the "intriguing possibility" that prevails in NT discussions, namely that Matthew 11:28-30 *must* be interpreted with regard to Sirach 6 and 51 and later gnostic parallels (pp. 8-9, 162). After assessing the wisdom myth in Matthew 11:19, 25-27, 28-30; 23:34-36, 37-39 (p. 163-86), he concludes that though wisdom thought is present, "the evidence does not support the contention that Matthew had an interest in formulating the identification of Jesus and Wisdom" (p. 185). Laansma then challenges Ben Witherington's contention that "Jesus = Wisdom" in Matthew 11:28-30 (pp. 186-207; cp. 235-38). When the dust finally settles, Laansma concedes that Matthew 11:25-27 may convey an "awareness of wisdom coloring," but verse "29c makes it very unlikely that the connection with Wisdom was his primary concern" (pp. 205-07).

After dispelling the wisdom myth of Jesus = Wisdom, Laansma demonstrates how it is that Matthew 11:28-30 is not at all an allusion to Sirach in chapter six, "The Meek King and God's Promise of Rest" (42 pp.). He argues convincingly for Matthew 11:28-30's conceptual and verbal connections with the Davidic dynasty in the OT rest tradition whereby Matthew presents Jesus as the lowly king, the Son of David. Laansma muses, "Matthew clearly saw in the Logion before him a reminiscence of a very familiar OT tradition, *God's promise of rest to his people*" and thereby "would have been well aware of its close tie to David, Solomon, and the Davidic dynasty" (p. 223). Although Laansma recognizes that Matthew 11:28-30 does not correspond exactly to some of the OT rest tradition passages (e.g., 2 Sam. 7:11), Matthew's Jesus "utters the Logion as the Son of David who himself claims to bring to fulfillment the oft repeated, OT promise of YHWH to his people, the promise of rest" (p. 251).

Laansma addresses the concept of rest in Hebrews 3-4 in chapter eight, "A Promise Remains" (pp. 106). Unlike Matthew, the author of Hebrews (*Auctor*) "leaves no doubt that he is making use of the OT rest tradition and that he is connecting it with the hope of a future Sabbath" (p. 252). Laansma, first addresses issues such as apocalypticism, dualism, and Hellenism (pp. 253-59). Preliminaries continue with specific exegetical questions about chapters 3-4, namely the background of Kadesh Barnea, the context of the "word of exhortation," and topology (pp. 259-75). Having argued that Hebrews 3-4 speaks of two situations, namely two "parallel" communities and their respective response to God's voice, Laansma moves on to define *καταπαυσις* and *σαββατισμός* (pp. 276-83). On the one hand, *σαββατισμός* is a Sabbath celebration and not a quietistic ideal nor a locale. On the other hand, *καταπαυσις* is a local reality, a place, similar to other eschatological, local realities (i.e., "the coming world" in 2:5; the heavenly city in 11:10, 16; 12:22; 13:14; the unshakeable kingdom in 12:28, etc.). Preliminaries completed, Laansma provides an exposition of Hebrews 4:1-11 (pp. 283-305). He presents and argues that God's resting place is where God holds his own Sabbath celebration, a place which was always intended for human entrance, promised to the "fathers," and is yet to be realized.



After extensive interaction with the text and various proposals on the background of καταπαυσις (Philonic and gnostic of Kasemann/Grasser; Jewish Apocalyptic of Hofius; and independent Hellenistic Jewish Christian), Laansma concludes "*Auctor* absorbs the καταπαυσις of 94,11 [95,11] into his promise Christology." The language of the Psalm is "a reference to a heavenly and eschatological *Heilsgut*," which is associated with God's own rest from his works at creation (Gen 2:2). Laansma rightly recognizes the background of the OT as primary for understanding *Auctor*'s essential concerns. *Auctor* does, however, share the apocalyptic idea that "the καταπαυσις is prepared in heaven and entered eschatologically in conjunction with a resurrection and judgment, that the עולם הבא (world-to-come) will be a day which is 'wholly Sabbath and rest'" (pp. 357-58).

Chapter eight concisely concludes his work (7 pp.). Although the tendency exists to associate Matthew 11 and Hebrews 3-4 with Gnosticism, Laansma reiterates the importance of not exaggerating such religious historical assignments. Thus he concludes, "our investigation has highlighted the distinctive concerns of the two writers and led us to doubt that they share a branch in the family tree of Gnosis" (pp. 360-62). Laansma, also remains true to his intention to let each passage speak for itself. Though he does recognize conceptual similarities, Laansma clearly identifies the important differences between the two passages (pp. 362-66).

*I Will Give You Rest* is researched well, grounded in sound reasoning, and presented pointedly. With the exception of the overly cumbersome and excessive length of chapter seven, Laansma divides his material into manageable units for reading purposes. Digesting all that Laansma has to offer, however, will require more than a single reading. A second and perhaps even a third read will be necessary in order to capture the breath of his contributions. Nevertheless, Laansma's work is a must read for any serious study of the rest motif in the New Testament.

Herbert W. Bateman IV, Grace Theological Seminary

Bruce Longenecker, ed. *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002. 253 pp., paper, \$24.95.

Narrative analysis is an academic darling that has risen out of the humanities in the last few decades. Despite the postmodern concern with narrative and the rising interest in the Jewish backgrounds of Paul, narrative analysis has been slow to show its face within the field of Pauline research. Though there have been a handful of groundbreaking works from scholars like Richard Hays and N.T. Wright, as well as another handful of syntheses and critiques, *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment* represents the first attempt by a group of scholars to assess the advantages and disadvantages of such an approach. This volume is intended to help determine the shape of a narrative approach to Paul in the years to come.

Much of the genius of this project is in a research methodology that features dialogue. Twelve top scholars were chosen from Britain's tight knit New Testament community to explore the possibilities and limitations of the narrative elements found

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within the Pauline corpus. The project was defined by five basic stories found within Paul: 1) God and Creation, 2) Israel, 3) Jesus, 4) Paul, and 5) the Inheritors and Predecessors of Paul's Gospel. These five topics are each debated within the letters of Romans and Galatians by two scholars, with an introduction provided by the editor, Bruce Longenecker, as well as two concluding essays from colleagues within the group. The debate was heightened by a round table discussion with all the scholars and including N.T. Wright.

Many potential exegetical problems are worked out through the round table format. For example, Longenecker's essay on the stories of Israel in Galatians and Romans found inconsistencies in the story Paul was working from. Because of the dialogical approach, Morna Hooker's critique—that Longenecker was incorrect in his reading of Galatians—was both anticipated and responded to in the footnotes of Longenecker's original article. This three dimensional tactic is shown in the debate between John Barclay and David Horrell on Paul's own story. Barclay sought to demonstrate how Paul's story is also a telling of the other stories, and warns against an atomistic approach to narrative analysis. Horrell's response to Barclay's excellent essay is sharp, cutting right to the issues in question, and attempts to clear up some of the muddy aspects of methodology.

Because of the newness of the field, there is still an occasional blurring of socio-rhetorical or foreground narrative analysis with the criticism of the narrative substructure that lies beneath the writings and which reveal the nature of Paul's thought world. Though Dunn touches on this concern in his concluding critique, it is never brought to any kind of conclusion. Some of the essays differ little from the way New Testament theology brings individual strands together into a cohesive whole; other essays hint at the refreshing possibilities that a narrative approach could have for understanding Paul. Watson is correct in his concluding essay that there is great ambivalence in the term "story." There is a need for a further volume honing the methodology of narrative analysis, and discovering the relationships between such ideas as poetic sequence, intertextuality, myth, narrative substructure, and the components of a narrative thought world, worldview, or symbolic universe.

Though the academic quality of the project is high, the essays are accessible to students willing to familiarize themselves with the background reading. These scholars are not only getting their feet wet (often for the first time from this perspective), but also wading into the debate—and only occasionally concerned about their traditional sand castles threatened by the incoming academic tide. The result is a refreshing collection of essays that give us a taste of the possibilities of a metanarrative to help bring clarity to some of Paul's writings. Despite the need for future work, this volume is essential for determining if narrative analysis will be a fad that passes with postmodernity's self-deconstruction, or will remain in the exegetical tool belt of future generations.

In the end, *Narrative Dynamics in Paul* is a story about a dozen of Britain's finest scholars meeting with one of the founding fathers of a burgeoning tradition, and engaging in old-fashioned dialogue and debate about the field of narrative analysis. It is well worth a read.

Brenton Dickieson, Regent College

Daniel Marguerat, *The First Christian Historian: Writing the "Acts of the Apostles."* JSNT Supplement Series; 121. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. xii + 299 pp, hardback, \$60.00.

The style and purpose of Luke's second volume has been debated for over one hundred fifty years. Is Luke following the conventions of an ancient novel or historical novel? Is he writing a history, utilizing the method of Thucydides in composing his speeches? What is the role of the Holy Spirit? Why is Paul's conversion mentioned three times? These are among the questions Marguerat addresses in his short monograph. In the process, intriguing issues are raised, stimulating the reader's interest.

The book is divided into eleven chapters. Of special interest is the opening chapter on Luke's historical method. Marguerat acknowledges that Luke writes from a specific point of view, rather than simply attempting to reproduce the "facts" of "what actually happened." Yet, such concerns of the modern age would not be important for Luke's account. "Rather, it must be evaluated according to the *point of view of the historian* which controls the writing of the narrative, *the truth* that the author aims to communicate and *the need for identity* to which the work of the historian responds (pp. 6-7, italics original). Indeed, Luke's method does correspond to the ten criteria of Lucian of Samosata's *How to Write History* (p. 14), as well as the conventions of the LXX, as encapsulated in 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings and 1-2 Maccabees. Thus, "Luke is situated precisely at the meeting point of Jewish and Greek historiographical currents" (p. 25).

Likewise, the chapter 3, discussing the unity of Luke-Acts, provides the reader with grist for thought. Marguerat concludes that Luke is both a historian and a theologian. Yet, the two tasks are actually in tension. As a theologian, Luke is anxious to demonstrate the continuity of God in history. Yet, as a historian, he recognizes that history develops, and that major shifts occur (see p. 63). Thus, the tension between the continuing validity of the Law of Moses, and the expansion of the gospel to the Gentiles, who are not under constraint to obey the full Law are tensions that remain unresolved.

The reader's most cherished assumptions about Acts are also challenged. It is often thought that one of the major themes in Acts is the role of the Holy Spirit, who guides the church at each of its major decisions (see 1:24-16; 2:1-4; 13:2; 16:7). Yet, as Marguerat points out in chapter 6 (pp. 109-128), "The work of the Holy Spirit," the Holy Spirit becomes less prominent as the narrative progresses (pp. 110-113). The Holy Spirit works much in the same way as the Spirit of God does in the Old Testament, for, "Luke does not see the Spirit as the source of faith, but sees him taking hold of believers, in response to their prayer, in order to integrate them into the witness of Christ" (p. 128).

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Finally, the reader is provided new perspectives for understanding well-known themes. In chapter 9 (pp. 178-204) Marguerat discusses Paul's conversion. It is an event of singular significance for Luke, which is narrated three times (in Acts 9; 22; and 26). Yet, each time, the details are slightly different. Is this a feature of Luke's disregard for historical detail, as some critics have maintained? According to Marguerat, it is not, for each account is trying to make a different point. In the first instance, the emphasis is on Paul's dramatic change of life, and the ecclesiastical point is made. In chapter 22, the point is the affirmation of Paul's Jewishness, as we see in his speaking to the crowds in "Hebrew" (i.e., Aramaic) in 21:40, his training under Gamaliel (22:5), and his prayer in the temple (22:17-21). In chapter 26 Luke is asserting the power of the risen Christ.

In conclusion, there is much in Marguerat's book to commend it to the reader. The careful exegesis is enlightening. The familiarity with ancient sources, both their parallels and differences from Luke's account, provide the reader with a cautious analysis, avoiding some of the enthusiasm for supposed "parallels" discovered by earlier critics. The book is well worth the reader's time and attention.

Russell Morton

Scot McKnight and Matthew C. Williams. *The Synoptic Gospels: An Annotated Bibliography*. Institute for Biblical Research Bibliographies 6. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000. 126 pp., paper, \$14.99.

In a series dedicated to facilitating scholars with bibliographic material, Scot McKnight and Matthew C. Williams make a valuable addition, this time in Synoptic Gospels research. For those unfamiliar with the series, these bibliographies are produced under the auspices of the Institute for Biblical Research. Each bibliography is intent on making accessible the most recent English-language works in order to "compliment and expedite thorough, informed research." Every bibliographic entry is annotated, that is, briefly discussed (one to three sentences in length) in order to inform the reader about their contents and general usefulness.

This sixth volume, dealing specifically with Synoptic Gospels research, is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter discusses bibliographies, surveys, and general introductions to the basic issues in Synoptic studies. The second chapter discusses textual issues, specifically textual criticism, style and language, contextual studies, and the use of the Old Testament in the Synoptic Gospels. The third chapter discusses methodological issues, specifically general studies, source criticism, Q studies, form criticism, redaction criticism, aesthetic criticism, social-scientific criticism, and genre criticism. Chapters four through six deal with each of the Synoptic Gospels in turn by their canonical order. The topics include introductory issues, commentaries, and special studies (which varies depending on the Gospel). Finally, the seventh chapter discusses theology. This final chapter comments on those studies that summarize the theology of the Synoptic Gospels in a synthetic manner.



*The Synoptic Gospels: An Annotated Bibliography* is an excellent resource for students and pastors. As the series to the preface states, this volume will "help guide students to works relevant to their research interests. They cut down the time needed to locate material, thus providing the researcher with more time to read, assimilate, and write" (7). Whether one uses the bibliography at the beginning of research, or to check that no major English-language work has been missed, the volume is valuable. Many other works could have been added to the bibliography, but that is beyond the purpose of the series. The goal of the series is not comprehensiveness, but up-to-date bibliographic access. According to the preface, the Institute for Biblical Research and Baker Book House is to publish updates of each volume about every five years (8). Such an accomplishment will provide students with the most relevant information of research in the field of biblical studies in an easily accessible and summarized fashion. This volume, as well as its counterparts, would be a valuable addition to the libraries of both individuals and academic institutions.

Edward W. Klink III, University of St. Andrews

John McRay, *Paul: His Life and Teaching*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Press, 2003. 479 pp, hardcover, \$32.99.

John McRay's book is intended for an evangelical audience, much in the tradition of F.F. Bruce's *Paul, Apostle of the Heart Set Free*. Like Bruce, McRay focuses more on the life of Paul as represented in the Book of Acts than upon Paul's letters. In this way the work is distinguished from more critical analyses of Paul, such as those of Beker, Sanders and Dunn. Unlike Bruce, McRay has separate section on the teachings of Paul. McRay has written an ambitious work, which, unfortunately, suffers from a lack of critical acumen that jeopardizes its value as a work on the life and thought of Paul.

McRay's first section is entitled "Paul's Life" (pp. [19]-260), where an attempt is made to fill in the sparse detail provided by the Book of Acts. McRay presents an interesting chronology of Paul's life (pp. 73-9), where the conversion of Paul is dated at A.D. 34, conducts the First Missionary Journey in 47-48, the second in 49-51 and the Third in 51-54. The Jerusalem Conference is dated at 49, with Paul's death being placed at 68. McRay accepts the so-called "South Galatian Hypothesis, but with a twist. Instead of trying to date Paul's account of Gal. 2 within the context of the Book of Acts (such as with the so-called "Famine Visit," Acts 11:29-30), he dates it as a third visit, which Luke omits (pp. 105-106). The logic seems to be an effort to rescue both the accuracy of Acts and Paul's accounts. Nevertheless, McRay's analysis here is not convincing.

Equally problematic are McRay's frequent excursions into psychologizing. While speculation and historical imagination are often helpful, one must be careful not to let imagination substitute for evidence. The reader is further hampered by incomplete information. One example is found on p. 244, where the city of Rome is described, and it mentions that adjacent to the Palatine Hill to the south is the Colosseum. McRay fails to note, however, that the Colosseum's construction was begun by Vespasian and completed by Titus, and that it was not standing at the time of Paul.

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The second portion of the book, entitled "Paul's Teaching" (pp. [261]-447), also presents problems. While discussing Paul's view of the atonement (pp. 317-333), a substantial section (pp. 319-325) examines the role of Christ as High Priest in Hebrews. McRay's defense for this analysis is that "[w]hile Hebrews may not have been written by Paul, the early church considered it sufficiently 'Pauline' in its content to include it in the two oldest and best-known lists of the Pauline canon" (p. 320). Even if most Christians in the early centuries of church history accepted Hebrews as Pauline, virtually no scholar today would. Including Hebrews' discussion of Jesus as High Priest, an image that occurs nowhere in Paul himself, to explain Paul's understanding of the atonement is unconvincing.

Furthermore, in chapter 13 (pp. 334-351), we read the title, "The Heart of Paul: The Theology of Ephesians." McRay opens with the acknowledgment that the authorship of Ephesians is questioned (pp. 334-336), before opting for traditional authorship (pp. 336-339). While McRay accepts Ephesians as Pauline, as is his right, to call a disputed letter the "heart of Paul" is, again, unconvincing.

Finally, for a book that claims to be addressed to students, it is remarkable that there are no bibliographies at the end of the chapters. There are extensive footnotes, but sometimes the scholarship represented by them is dated, as, for example, constant reference to R.H. Charles's edition of the *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (1910-1911). Again, the casual reader would not be aware of the explosion of studies on Second Temple Judaism in the last thirty years by reading McRay's book.

In conclusion, while lay readers may glean something of profit from McRay's book, in the end, it fails in presenting a convincing portrait of the Apostle Paul. The first section indulges in psychologizing, and contains occasional misleading statements. The second section fails in addressing Paul's theology and engages in questionable methodology. The lack of helpful bibliographical material is another setback. It is unfortunate that a more adequate work could not have been written.

Russell Morton

C. Marvin Pate, *Four Views on the Book of Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998. 252 pp., paper, \$ 16.99.

As the title explains, this work focuses specifically on the book of Revelation. The views presented are preterist, idealist and futurist. The futurist approach is treated twice as classical and progressive dispensationalism. The four parts are authored by proponents of each view.

The preterist read of Revelation interprets the book as being fulfilled in the first centuries of the Christian era. It is a review of the history of that period. The idealist approach focuses on the ongoing conflict of good and evil with little or no historical connection. Thus Revelation is to be interpreted symbolically. Classical dispensationalism divides salvation history into eras or epochs according to how God

administered differently in each. The interpretation of Revelation is literal. Thus chapters 4-22 are viewed as prophecies of that which is yet to come. Progressive dispensationalism adds to the classical approach the idea of already/not yet. Thus the differences with the classical approach are as follows: (1) PD holds that Jesus began his Davidic heavenly reign with the resurrection, (2) the church is not a parenthesis in God's plan, (3) the New Covenant is beginning to be fulfilled in the church.

The real question the book helps the reader decide is whether Revelation is a blueprint for the future or is it to be interpreted more symbolically. The four authors clearly and carefully set forth their varying positions.

Richard E. Allison

Stanley E. Porter, *The Criteria for Authenticity in Historical-Jesus Research: Previous Discussion and New Proposals*. JSNTS upp 191; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000. 299 pp., cloth, \$85.00.

This is an important book on an issue of import more widely than just in the area of historical Jesus research. While the particular topic is narrow ("the use of the Greek language as providing the basis for new criteria for establishing authentic sayings of Jesus," 17), there are important ramifications for the whole area of historiography. How does one, in biblical studies or even more widely, establish the validity of historical claims and interpretations? This is most particularly important in the field under discussion here, since the work of the Jesus Seminar, and others, has raised questions, at least among the laity, about what we can know about Jesus at all.

The author, formerly Professor of Theology at the University of Surrey Roehampton and currently and current President of McMaster Divinity College in Canada, is a prolific author and editor as well as an expert in Greek, and is well qualified to address this topic.

The book is presented in 2 parts: previous discussion and new proposals. In the first chapter, Porter addresses the 'Third Quest' for the historical Jesus, looking at their predecessor quests and questioning whether there is any substantive difference between the second quest and current research. He provides a helpful 3-page timeline of the quest, giving names, dates, and influences on many of the scholars involved. In the second chapter, Porter looks specifically at the development of criteria for authenticity, along with the rise of form and redaction criticism. He presents and evaluates the criteria of double dissimilarity ('still widely used', 76), least distinctiveness (diminishing use), coherence or consistency (problematic), multiple-attestation of cross-section (often without foundation), Semitic language phenomena (in trouble). Porter includes a 1-page table showing the various criteria from this and the next chapter, their dates, the criticisms ('Higher', form and redaction) and quest to which they relate. A shorter 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter looks at recent developments, especially looking at the work of John Meier (criteria of embarrassment, and 'rejection and execution') and Gerd Theissen (criterion of historical plausibility). In all, the section is clearly written, comprehensive, and quite helpful.

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Porter's proposal is to move beyond the Semitic language background to criteria of Greek language and its context, Greek textual variance (comparing pericopes between the Synoptics), and discourse features (using the relatively recent, and often helpful, area of discourse analysis or textlinguistics). He provides a compact but in-depth overview of Greek language and socio-historical study, showing how this burgeoning field, especially among Evangelical scholars, has relevance for determining Jesus' words. (Also included is a special, 17-page excursus in response to the views of Maurice Casey). As a model for his last criterion, he analyses Mark 13.

At each stage, Porter's resources through footnotes and concluding bibliography (over 30 pages in length) is extensive and representative. His most frequent sources and dialogue partners are Craig Evans and Gerd Theissen. If only for the bibliographical resources, if not for his helpful analyses and suggestions, this volume will need to be consulted by all engaged in the study of the historical Jesus, and of biblical historiography more widely. For academic libraries.

David W. Baker

John Christopher Thomas, *The Devil, Disease and Deliverance: Origins of Illness in New Testament Thought*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998. 360 pp., paper, \$21.95.

John Christopher Thomas is Professor of New Testament at the Church of God School of Theology in Cleveland, Tennessee. A scholar and pastor within the Pentecostal and charismatic traditions, Thomas was struck by a significant disparity on the issue of healing. On the one hand, healing receives much popular attention, but on the other hand scholars devote little time to it. Confusion and controversy reign over the relationships between the Devil and disease, sickness and sin, healing and forgiveness, and exorcism and deliverance.

Thomas finds three main approaches to divine healing within these traditions. The first view is that a demon lurks behind every illness or misfortune. So, every healing requires a rebuke of Satan and prayer for healing from God. A lack of healing, in this view, reveals a lack of faith. The second view is that while all sickness ultimately arises due to the Devil, not every particular instance has a demonic origin. Since we all live in a fallen world, much illness now arises from natural sources. This approach points out that there is little biblical support for extensive demonic activity in illness. Therefore, Christians should always pray for healing, but should not always expect divine healing. The third groups Thomas calls 'functional deists.' They genuinely believe that God does heal and that the Devil can cause illness, but they are turned off by the excesses of some advocates, and confused over how to discern God's will in specific instances. They pray for healing but don't expect it to occur.

Thomas responds to this confusion and controversy by providing a literary analysis of the New Testament texts dealing with healing. He criticizes much previous historical-critical analysis of these texts because of its focus on "artificial hypothetical



reconstructions" (p. 15) which have sometimes ignored or distorted the plain meaning of the text. Thomas claims many scholars construct a first-century view of the demonic and then read the New Testament texts into this construct. Thomas' literary approach finds little textual evidence that the early church believed that demons were behind most illnesses.

Thomas begins his study with James 5:14-16 because this is the only New Testament passage describing a procedure for divine healing. It explicitly links sin and sickness and appears to assume that healing can be expected and should be a part of the on-going ministry of the church. It has thus been a central passage in the development of Pentecostalism. Thomas reviews the many different interpretations of this passage. He points to the Old Testament backdrop of God punishing sin, sometimes by inflicting illness. But he also shows clearly that even in the Old Testament, not all sickness was viewed as being due to sin. He concludes that James 5 teaches that some illness is the result of sin, and when the connection is known, the sin should be confessed. Therefore, a ministry of healing should exist in the church. However, this passage does not teach that all illness is the result of sin.

Thomas then turns to the Pauline material and points to Paul's validation of his own ministry through signs and wonders (1 Corinthians 12:12; Romans 15:18-19) and his teaching on the gifts of healing (1 Corinthians 12:9). However, Thomas points out that with the possible exception of the thorn in the flesh "Paul does not attribute sickness or disease to the Devil and/or demons" (p. 43). Paul does see a connection between sin and sickness or death (1 Corinthians 11:27-34), but the purpose of such suffering is discipline. At the same time, Galatians 4 shows that even an apostle could have an illness without being possessed or under divine judgment.

Paul's affliction with the thorn in the flesh arose from his divine visions, showing that true spirituality did not protect him from infirmities. It also demonstrates that the prayer of a godly man does not always lead to healing. Epaphroditus is another godly man whose service of God led to sickness and whom God did not miraculously heal (Philippians 2:25-30). Again, Timothy's stomach trouble gives no hint that sickness was a negative reflection of his spirituality and Paul's recommendation of wine shows that medicines were permitted (2 Timothy 4:20).

Thomas next moves to the Johannine literature that reveals a clear and strong connection between sin and sickness (John 5), but with an assumption that the person would know the precise nature of the sin. It is also clear that all sickness is not the direct result of sin (John 9). In the case of the blind man, God is seen as the origin of the illness. From this, we see that suffering can sometimes be the will of God in order to bring about the works of God. Illness is never attributed to Satan by John. There are other cases where the origin of the illness is not clarified, leaving the suggestion that it can be of purely natural origin. In response to divine healing, giving testimony is the appropriate response. Prayer should be the response to illness, presumably with prayer for discernment as to whether the sickness was a form of punishment for sin or something that would lead to God's works being manifested. The greeting in 3 John is often taken to support the view that God desires all believers to prosper and have perfect health. However, Thomas clearly demonstrates that this verse was a standard literary device used

in both Christian and secular letters of the day. Finding a theology of health and prosperity here is a function of eisegesis, not exegesis.

So far in his study, Thomas finds little evidence that illness was attributed to the Devil or demons, but this picture slowly begins to change with the Synoptic gospels. Here, Jesus is in conflict with demons and various infirmities are attributed to demons or unclean spirits. Unlike James, Paul and John, Mark does not directly attribute illness to sin. He does link it with Satan, but he also attributes the same symptoms to non-demonic illness. Thomas claims that the church should be able discern the origin of an illness, but gives little indication where this particular claim finds biblical warrant.

Matthew has more infirmities caused by demons than Mark, but most accounts don't indicate demonic involvement in illness. Matthew never attributes illness to God, or sin as a cause of illness. Luke, unlike all the others, seems to group healing and exorcism together and thus Pentecostal and charismatic traditions turn to Luke-Acts for biblical support. However, Thomas notes that Luke is not reluctant to attribute death or illness to the hand of God. This may be due to unbelief, or may be sent by God for redemptive purposes. In those cases, it can sometimes be removed by prayer. Luke also makes a close connection between infirmity and demons, and in these cases exorcism can lead to healing. However, Luke also includes numerous healings with no indication of the origin of the illness with a presumption that the illness was of natural origin. Luke also describes devout people who are afflicted by demons without being demon-possessed. Luke 13 makes it clear that natural calamities are not always a gauge of one's sinfulness, and Thomas believes it is legitimate to apply this principle to illness also.

These findings for Luke become the foundation of Thomas' overall conclusion. "In contrast to claims made both at the scholarly and popular levels, the New Testament writers generally make a clear distinction between demon possession and illness" (p. 301). The vast majority of New Testament illness references give no indication as to the origin of the infirmity. Thomas concludes, therefore, that most sickness should be seen as neutral and natural in origin.

Our responses to illness should then include prayer, discernment (as to whether or not sin is involved), confession and intercession (when sin is involved), exorcism of possessed non-believers, and appropriate use of medicine. Applying his findings to those within the Pentecostal and charismatic traditions, Thomas notes that "a total rejection of the use of doctors outdistances the New Testament teaching and thus may do much to harm rather than help" (p. 319).

Since only about ten percent of all infirmities described in the New Testament are attributed to demons, "it would seem wise to avoid the temptation of assuming that in most cases an infirmity is caused by Satan and/or demons. Such a realization, and in some cases adjustment in thinking, could serve to bring a degree of moderation through biblical critique to an area that has been and continues to be sorely abused. . . . the current specialization in exorcisms by some in the church is misdirected at best. . . . there is precious little evidence in the New Testament to support many of the claims that come from those in the 'deliverance ministry'" (pp. 317-8).

Thomas' excellent book should be read and studied by anyone seeking to bring the healing power of God to others.

Dónal P. O'Mathúna, Mount Carmel College of Nursing, Columbus, Ohio

Brad H. Young, *The Parables: Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation*, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998. 332 pp., hardcover, \$24.95.

Young's investigation and analysis is both interesting and challenging. The introduction gives a solid overview of parables in general as teaching tools. Young also surveys the relationship between Jesus' parables and the broader context of Rabbinic Judaism. He makes extensive use of Jewish materials related to Second Temple Judaism including the Mishnah, Talmud, Dead Sea Scrolls, as well as the work of modern Jewish scholars and other major secondary sources. The general outline he follows in his exposition of the various parables is logical and helpful. He opens with a "focus" section describing the basic thrust or theme of each parable. He then generally surveys the history of Christian interpretation, followed by an analysis of the original setting in life with a comparison to Rabbinic parallels if applicable, or Jewish tradition in general before bringing us to his conclusions on a particular parable.

Young's analysis of the well known parable of the prodigal son is excellent, and he elucidates some very interesting background information not found in most commentaries on this parable. He notes that according to Middle Eastern culture and Jewish tradition the older son should act as a mediator in times of family crisis or dispute. This shines more light on the older son's shortcomings. When the younger asked for his portion of the inheritance, the older should have intervened and attempted to talk his brother out of such a shameful request. The older son's inappropriate silence would have been noted by the original audience. The older brother had a responsibility to shield his father from the hurt of such an impudent demand from the younger child. This type of additional information offered by Young shows that in this parable the older son is not merely less important third figure, but a significant actor in this mini drama, and one with some more subtle but significant shortcomings of his own. The original audience then would have perceived the older son as failing in his family role and showing a level of selfishness similar to but more subtle than that of his younger brother. By passively acquiescing to the division of the estate he demonstrates that he too is selfish and self centered only in a different way, thus the later protestations of obedience by the older brother would have had a rather hollow ring to the original audience. The older brother is actually portrayed as being quite emotionally distant from both his father and younger brother, yet the father remains gracious and accepting of him as well. Young's exposition of this parable thus adds greatly to our understanding of this well known parable. Young's use of relevant cultural clues and Jewish sources are a primary strength of this book. Young is not merely rehashing minutiae of linguistic analysis or seeking some novel source critical angle, he is adding valuable new insights to our understanding of the parables through extensive comparison with Jewish thought, theology and culture of the Second Temple period.



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Young's interpretation of the perplexing parable of the unjust steward is very stimulating and it might be more controversial than his other expositions. He contends (following Flusser) that Jesus's reference to "sons of light" (Luke 16:8) is not a reference to his own followers but rather a reference to the Essenes at Qumran, thus the parable is an indictment against the Essene policy of total withdrawal from the surrounding society, refusal to interact with outsiders and their financial policies. A less controversial, but illuminating point that Young makes is with regard to the owner's commendation to the fired steward for his shrewd action in reducing the debtor's debt loads. Young indicates that we are looking at an honor and shame culture. Honor being the highest good that can be attained, more prized than even material wealth. The fired steward attained honor for the owner by means of the debt reduction. The debtors were as yet unaware that the steward had been fired; they would have attributed the good fortune of their debt reduction to the generosity of the owner, and publicly praised his generosity to others in the community. The owner would gain favor and honor within the community. The owner would then in an awkward position where he could not go back to the debtors and ask for the original debts, such action would garner resentment and lower the high esteem he had just achieved in the community. The steward's personally motivated actions thus gained social goodwill for both himself and his former employer. Even if one rejects the association of the "sons of light" with the Essenes, the illumination of the context in an honor and shame culture makes both the actions of the steward and the owner's response to his actions far more intelligible than they would otherwise be to a modern Western reader.

The above discussion selected only two parables to give a feel for his approach and contribution to the study of the parables, however his study adds valuable insights to all the parables he reviews. Overall Young's study of the parables is an excellent and stimulating contribution to the study of the parables and is well worth reading.

Christopher Coles

Mark A. Matson, *John: Interpretation Bible Studies*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002. vi+140 pp., \$7.95.

Mark A. Matson's study *John* is the latest addition to John Knox's Interpretation Bible Studies series. The Interpretation Bible Studies series builds upon the Interpretation commentaries (John Knox Press), and continues to provide a high view of biblical authority and excellence in scholarship, with the express goals of helping their readers in perceiving and understanding God's truth so that they may bear spiritual and ethical fruit.

While the book serves largely as a companion piece to the lengthier Interpretation Commentary on *John*, by Gerard Sloyan, the author proves to be insightful in organizing the Gospel thematically. The study itself organizes the material into ten units that attempt to provide a grasp of the major themes and flow from the biblical book.



One of the strengths of the study is the manner in which it is organized. The ten units can be taught over ten weeks or combined for a shorter study. The study can also be integrated with other sources as part of a more in-depth study of the book, or can be used as a personal Bible study. Suggestions for each type of use are included at the back of the book. In addition to the adaptability, Matson also brings a good blending of historical facts and theological insights. The questions for reflection at the end of each unit provide ample opportunity for discussion, and pull the material together nicely. In addition to Sloyan's work, Matson provides good references, giving the reader the means to take his or her study of the fourth Gospel much deeper.

Due to its brevity and scope, *John* does not give much space to such issues as authorship, date, or location of writing, though that is not the author's aim. Instead, the reader is referred to other commentaries. While the series introduction insists that the material can be used as a stand alone study, it must be combined with commentaries and other sources to bring the depth that is needed in most church settings. Additionally, I found that the many sidebars included throughout the text were distracting, pulling the eye away from the text. The back cover suggests that the series includes numerous illustrations and maps. However, the book contains no maps, despite the numerous journeys and variety of locations contained in the Gospel account. Further, the occasional black and white illustrations were too small to be of much practical use and largely represent pictures that can be obtained in any decent set of religious clip art.

On the whole, this book is well worth the cost for anyone who wants to engage in a serious study of the fourth Gospel, either personally or as part of a group study. Though not a replacement for a good commentary, this book helps bring out the Gospel's prominent themes and provides a unity to the Gospel that is sometimes lost in larger works.

Thomas M. Scott

L. Ann Jervis, *Galatians*. New International Biblical Commentary. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999. xiv + 172 pp., paper, \$11.95.

L. Ann Jervis is Associate Professor of New Testament at Wycliffe College, Toronto. She has published several articles and books on issues related to the Pauline corpus. Her work on Galatians in the New International Biblical Commentary is intended to provide the non-theologically trained Bible reader with a reliable exposition of the New International Version.

To her credit, Jervis is forthright about her understanding of Galatians and its impact on the commentary. In her introduction, she proposes that Paul's primary description of the gospel in Galatians is not justification by faith, but rather union with Christ (in keeping with her "New Perspective" proponents E.P. Sanders, Albert Schweitzer and Richard Hays). As one reads through the commentary, it becomes clear that there are two primary interpretive decisions Jervis has made which lead to her conclusion concerning Paul's gospel. First, she takes the phrase *en Christō* found in 1:22; 2:4; 3:14, 26, 28; 5:6 to mean 'in participation with Christ'. She calls this Paul's central

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message in Galatians—that believers are “in Christ” (p.22). Second, she takes the phrase *pistis Christou* found in Gal. 2.16, and 3.22, 33 to mean the “faith of Christ” (subjective genitive). This term, according to Jervis, is not to be confused with the faithfulness of Christ (i.e. his obedience and sacrificial death). Rather, the faith of Christ literally means the faith that Christ has. These two interpretive decisions render the following message in Galatians: Christ’s faith becomes our faith as we participate in him. For Jervis, justification means “being as Christ is, having the same faith that Christ has, which occurs because Christ lives in the believer” (p. 76).

The most helpful contribution that this commentary brings to its intended audience is its concise and even-handed introduction. Jervis addresses the situation and opponents and the date and audience options in a way that would be very helpful for a lay Bible reader who might otherwise be overwhelmed by the competing theories expressed in a more technical commentary. However, both in the introduction and throughout the commentary Jervis fails to sufficiently discuss whether the main Jewish framework Paul was working against was justification by works or covenantal nomism. She devotes only two brief paragraphs (p.84) to prove that covenantal nomism was Paul’s foil, hardly adequate for the commentary’s intended audience.

Another feature that adds value to the commentary is the additional notes contained at the end of each section. These notes reflect Jervis’ expertise in the field, and often include excellent exegetical comments, added background information, helpful bibliographic references, and surveys of the various ways in which a phrase or verse have been interpreted. One such example of the latter can be found on page 82 where Jervis concisely summarizes the various understandings of “works of law” by such influential figures as Luther, Bultmann, Dunn and Sanders. Having these notes at the end helps keep the reader from being distracted from the main discussion.

The most glaring exegetical weakness of Jervis’ work is her insistence that the phrase *en Christō* always means “in participation with Christ” or “union with Christ” (1:22, 2:4, 3:14, 26, 28; 5:6), a move that substantially influences the way she also interprets *pistis Christou* ( 2:16; 3:22, 33). It would have been more helpful to see other ways the preposition could have been translated and applied.

In the end Jervis’ commentary is a very concise, well-written, and reliable exposition of the “New Perspective” approach to Galatians. The ultimate worth of this commentary will no doubt depend upon whether one embraces Jervis’ overarching understanding of Paul’s gospel and main message in Galatians.

Kelly David Liebengood, SEMINARIO ESEPA, San José, Costa Rica

Ben Witherington, *Grace in Galatia: A Commentary on Paul’s Letter to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. 494 pp., paper, \$37.50.

This work continues the series of ‘socio-rhetorical’ commentaries produced by Ben Witherington in recent years. At over 477 pages, it is a substantial volume with numerous helpful features: (1) a thorough introduction and significant bibliography of

works on Galatians; (2) a verse-by-verse exposition of the text with much attention to syntactical and grammatical issues; (3) ten excurses interspersed throughout the commentary, dealing with issues such as circumcision in the NT world and Paul's view of the Law; (4) eleven sections entitled 'Bridging the Horizons,' which seek to apply the text to areas of modern concern. Witherington brings to this commentary an ability to discuss complicated issues in a clear and helpful way.

As suggested by the designation 'socio-rhetorical commentary,' much of Witherington's focus in the present volume is on applying various insights from the social sciences and rhetorical criticism to the study of Galatians. For instance, Witherington identifies as one of the major theses of his commentary the view that Paul, when he wrote Galatians, was already thinking of Christianity as a sect rather than a reform movement within Judaism. This view comports with Witherington's inclination to see more apocalyptic discontinuity than salvation-historical continuity in Galatians. Much attention is also given to the rhetorical structure of Galatians as Witherington builds his case that rhetorical conventions are more determinative for the structure of the letter than are epistolary forms. In addition, Witherington argues throughout the commentary that Galatians should be seen as deliberative rhetoric rather than forensic rhetoric.

In addition to his socio-rhetorical emphasis, Witherington deals with some of the key questions which inevitably arise in the interpretation of Galatians. Though disagreeing with James Dunn and other proponents of the 'new perspective' that Paul is only polemicizing against those boundary markers which separate Jew from Gentile, Witherington also takes issue with the traditional Lutheran reading of Galatians. In particular, Witherington seeks to show that the pressing issue in Galatians is not about 'getting in' or even 'staying in,' but rather about 'going on.' Though Paul believes that salvation is indeed by faith apart from obedience to the Mosaic Law, he is primarily concerned in Galatians with seeing that the Galatian Christians go on in the faith with which they began their Christian life. In Paul's mind, the crucial factor for the Galatian church is the eschatological work of Christ, which has now made the Law a glorious anachronism.

Several concerns about the commentary may briefly be mentioned. First, it is difficult to discern the intended audience of the commentary. Certain features, such as the application sections and relatively light treatment of text critical issues, seem to incline toward a wider audience, but the length of the commentary and its occasionally technical discussions make it less helpful for those who are not scholars. Second, numerous typographical and grammatical errors prove to be increasingly distracting as one reads through the commentary. Third, though Witherington has made substantial contributions in socio-rhetorical issues and has helpfully brought many Greco-Roman sources to bear upon Galatians, his treatment of Jewish sources and motifs is less substantial (a quick glance at the indices in the back of the book will bear out this observation). For example, although a significant number of recent scholars have argued that Paul in Galatians is drawing upon a sin-exile-restoration motif found often in the OT and Jewish sources, Witherington includes little to no discussion of this possibility.

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Despite these several concerns, Witherington's commentary proves to be a valuable addition to the constantly expanding literature on Paul's letter to the Galatians.

Stephen Witmer, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

Gareth L. Cockerill, *Hebrews: A Bible Commentary in the Wesleyan Tradition*. Indianapolis, Indiana: Wesley Publishing House, 1999. 316 pp, hardback, \$24.99.

Gareth L. Cockerill, Ph.D., is a professor of New Testament and Biblical Theology at Wesley Biblical Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi. As the title indicates, he seeks here to interpret Hebrews from a Wesleyan perspective. The approach is to explain the text of Hebrews paragraph by paragraph. The biblical text from the NIV is not reproduced. Where it is quoted, the text is in bold type. The target audience for the series is the intelligent lay reader.

The sixteen-page introduction includes: characteristics, authorship, recipients, purpose, and Old Testament references. An outline of the text deals with the text in six sections to be discussed later. Extensive footnotes including technical material appear as endnotes to each chapter. A very limited bibliography completes the extra materials.

Following the lead of Hebrews 13.22, the author believes the work is a sermon "reminiscent of synagogue preaching in the Greek speaking world." The question of authorship goes unanswered except to note that the style differs greatly from Paul. The recipients were Hebrew Christians experiencing public shame that apparently had become lax in their Christian living and were stunted in their Christian maturity. The author believes them to be Greek speaking Jewish converts in accord with the title of the book.

The author is committed to an Old Testament pattern of three parts for his basic commentary. Part the first portrays God's people gathered around Mount Sinai. Part the second portrays "God's people in the wilderness traveling to the Promised Land." Part the third "shows the ministry of the high priest." Thus for the author this is expressed in Hebrews as a chiasm as follows:

Sinai Picture (1.1-2.4)

Pilgrimage Picture (2.5-4.13)

High Priest Picture (4.14-10.31)

Pilgrimage Picture (10.32-12.13)

Sinai Picture (12.14-29)

Chapter 13 then becomes a final application and farewell. Each of the pictures in the chiasm is given a Christological interpretation and serves as the basis for understanding the book.

It seems to me that a better approach to Hebrews would be to look at the mass of material concerning the recipients, their problems and their needs (2.1-3; 3.18-19; 4.1-5, 11, 14; 5.11-14; 6.1-8, 11-12; 10.32-37; 12.1-2, 12-17, 25. 13.1-25). Then proceed to (1) Christology and (2) preaching for answers to the perplexing problems of drift, rest, perseverance, suffering, courage and immaturity.



The author exhibits great awareness of quotes from the LXX Old Testament and its usage by the author of Hebrews. Recurring themes receive emphasis throughout the work. This is perhaps the highlight of the study. Considerable attention is paid to the tenses of verbs, which is important but sometimes conclusions are overdrawn.

Richard Allison

Donald A. Hagner, *Encountering the Book of Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2002. 213 pp., paper, \$21.99.

This is an amazingly engaging commentary on one of the most important books in the New Testament. It is an attractive chapter-by-chapter commentary written in a user-friendly, lucid style. There are over sixty side bars filled with informative information such as: an outline of Hebrews, Midrashic interpretation, Psalm 110 in Hebrews, Sabbath Rest, and Melchizedek.

The Encounter Series by Baker targets college-level Bible course as textbooks. However, this work deserves the serious study of any earnest Christian. The work surveys the entire book of Hebrews, moving between its theological message and practical application. The goals of the work are as follows: "(1) present the factual content, (2) introduce historical, geographical and cultural background, (3) outline hermeneutical principles, (4) to work on critical issues, (5) to substantiate the Christian faith."

The author makes the case for a high Christology in Hebrews emphasizing Christ as high priest, the eternal nature of Christ's priesthood, Christ's atoning work, Christ's enthronement, the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice and Christ the author and pioneer of salvation. This is accomplished by demonstrating that the new is already present in the old.

The author considers the work first an exhortation or sermon, then a treatise and finally an epistle exhibiting terminal characteristics of such. The major purpose of Hebrews is "to exhort as the frequently inserted exhortations indicate." Thus careful consideration is given to the circumstances of the original readers. Apparently they are in danger of lapsing back into Judaism or Gentile paganism or perhaps a retreat into proto-Gnosticism. To counter, this according to Dr. Hagner, Hebrews sets forth the "incomparable superiority of Christ and the finality of God's work in Jesus." In other words the answer is preaching and theology. The author of Hebrews accomplishes this by alternating between discourse and application.

The author includes eighteen pages of introduction addressing origin, author, readers, date, purpose, structure, literary genre, archetypes, use of Old Testament, relation of old and new and the problem of anti-semitism in Hebrews. The end materials include: ten pages of Conclusion, setting forth theological emphases, contribution to New Testament theology, what Hebrews offers the church and the individual Christian; an Excursus dealing with entrance into the canon; a Selected Bibliography; a Glossary; a Scripture Index and a Subject Index.

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The book of Hebrews and this commentary serve as a corrective to triumphalism, the get rich quick gospel and easy eschatology exhorting the Christian to persevere in the faith once and for all delivered to the saints. Faith and faithfulness receive greater treatment than in any other book in the New Testament.

The author, Donald Hagner, is the George Eldon Ladd Professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary. He wrote the two-volume Matthew commentary in the Word Biblical Commentary series. The present book is a complement to his Hebrews in the New International Biblical Commentary series.

Richard Allison

William J. Webb. *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals, Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. 2001. 256 pp, paper, \$25.00.

Scripture assumes slavery is an on-going institution and even encourages slaves to obey their masters. How then has the church moved to a consistent stance of abolition? How are we to understand those slavery passages? Should we simply relegate them to obscurity or apply them simplistically to current employee situations (always obey one's employer)? If the church can reject that social institution then using similar reasoning can/does it also reject patriarchy? If the answer is, "yes," then does that also lead to an acceptance of homosexuality?

In his excellent book Webb uses these three topics as case studies to consider a "Redemptive-movement" hermeneutic. He writes, "Relative to when and where the words of scripture were first read, they spoke redemptively to their given communities. Yet, to stay with the isolated words of the text instead of their spirit leads to an equally tragic misreading. To neglect reapplying the redemptive spirit of the text adds a debilitating impotence to a life-transforming gospel that should be unleashed within our modern world" (50).

Webb analyzes many of the most important texts regarding these topics, but he is most interested in providing the reader with a way to help them consider the cultural component of any text. He assesses whether a text is "culturally bound" or is "trans-cultural" (timeless). "...what aspects of the text should we continue to practice and what aspects should we discontinue or change due to differences between cultures" (51). Webb works through 18 different criteria to consider the influence of culture on a particular text. In addition to his three primary topics he also makes use of many less controversial subjects as examples to demonstrate how a particular criteria works.

Webb uses a case-study format and the topic of women to arrange his 18 criteria, moving from the most persuasive for that discussion to those that are inconclusive. His table of contents consists of his hermeneutical terminology that is often not clear until one reads the section it refers to. However, once having read the book, the titles become useful for future reference. The order would be different for other topics since not every criterion is equally relevant for every topic. By comparing and

contrasting the criteria with various topics he demonstrates the strengths and weaknesses of each criterion.

Webb guides decisions about the application of a text with a 'ladder of abstraction.' Cultural forms are at the bottom with trans-cultural principles at the top. Following the redemptive spirit of the text one can identify a higher principle and apply it in our culture. For example, the Old Testament command to leave the corners of one's fields unharvested is a culturally specific application of a higher trans-cultural principle to help/feed the poor and even of the higher command to love your neighbor. Leaving the corners of fields unharvested today would not do the urban poor much good given their living distance from wheat fields but the trans-cultural principle of caring for the poor still stands (210). Thus the redemptive concern of the text is not lost when the culturally specific application is no longer possible.

Webb is an egalitarian and does not believe scripture supports homosexuality but he considers other perspectives fairly (even including a chapter titled, *What if I'm Wrong*). In addition he also discusses why scripture accepts cultural practices that we perceive today as inherently unjust and how we determine what is "better" or "redemptive." Webb's extensive bibliography is helpfully grouped by topic and he has included four appendixes where he has collected information or commentary both ancient and modern on scripture related to women.

I have only small criticism of this book. His focus is cultural hermeneutics so he touches on other hermeneutical approaches only sporadically. Thus Webb can consider a soft-patriarchy as a possibility (243). A feminist hermeneutic would question that it is possible to privilege or honor one gender over the other without diminishing the value and role of the other gender based on the *experience* of women (not one of his criterion). So the reader must consider how other hermeneutical methods may also shed light on the discussion. Secondly Webb seems to make a significant logical error early in his book. He notes that when moving from ultra-soft slavery to abolitionism the last thing to go is *ownership*. He then states that moving from patriarchy to egalitarianism for women the last thing to go is *hierarchy* (48). I would suggest that the last thing to go is hierarchy based on *gender* irregardless of gifting, interest, or calling which is different than arguing against all forms of hierarchy.

I found this book extremely helpful in developing a consistent and reasoned way to interpret scripture. Webb's effort to provide an objective approach to these topics is of great value to anyone wanting to keep all of scripture authoritative and who may be struggling with these issues. Overall this is a finely written study of cultural hermeneutics on some very important issues and well worth reading.

Donna Laird

Gabriele Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways between Qumran and Enochic Judaism*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. xx + 230 pp., paper, \$25.

In *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*, Gabriele Boccaccini is concerned with the origin of the Essene movement and its relationship with the people of Qumran.

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Boccaccini offers an alternative hypothesis to Essene origins and its connections to Qumran, namely, the Enochic/Essene Hypothesis. Boccaccini claims that "Enochic Judaism is the modern name for the mainstream body of the Essene party, from which the Qumran community parted as a radical, dissident, and marginal offspring" (16). For Boccaccini, systemic analysis is a methodology that allows texts to be grouped according to chronology and ideological structure rather than traditional associations. Through "systemic analysis of middle Judaic documents" (middle Judaism refers to the period during which "Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism emerged from their common 'biblical' roots" [xiii]), Boccaccini believes it is possible to distinguish between Enochic Essenism and Essenism associated with Qumran. According to Boccaccini, these have been misleadingly combined under the title *Essene* by ancient historiography, resulting in an ideologically monolithic perspective of Essenism in modern scholarship. Although historiography is important to Boccaccini, it has served to confusingly link *trajectories* of Judaism into a single expression of Judaism that many scholars mistakenly refer to as Essene.

Through historiographical analysis, Boccaccini describes the Essenes, as recorded in Jewish sources (Philo and Josephus) and non-Jewish sources (Pliny the Elder and Dio of Prusa), in the following manner: 1) both sets of sources can be confidently referring to the common phenomenon of Essenism through their common usage of the term *Essene*; 2) all characteristics of the Dead Sea Essenes (described by Pliny and Dio) applied to the Essenes located throughout Palestine (described by Philo and Josephus), yet with less intensity and radicalization; 3) the Dead Sea Essenes were characterized by their distinctiveness – they were intriguing sensationalism for hunters of exotic stories such as Pliny and Dio (48-49). "In short, historiographical analysis leads to the overall conclusion that the community of the Dead Sea, described by Pliny and Dio, was a radical and minority group within the larger Essene movement, described by Philo and Josephus" (49).

Qumran was also inheritor of more than a tendency to radicalize Essenism, however. According to Boccaccini's systemic analysis, Qumran can be shown to have been involved in the ongoing opposition of Enochic and Zadokite Judaism. The Enochic priestly establishment openly opposed the Zadokite priestly establishment somewhere between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries B.C.E. As inheritors of this schism, the Qumran library is representative of the diverse theological perspectives of its manuscripts, although modified as necessary according to the world view of Qumran Essenism, according to Boccaccini. The library was not an *ad hoc* collection. For Boccaccini, the library was commonly owned rather than commonly authored (54-55). Containing both biblical and non-biblical (sectarian) literature, the Dead Sea Scrolls are the result of "a deliberate and coherent process of selection and preservation" (58). At the heart of the sectarian literature are the ideological themes of 1) cosmic dualism, 2) predeterminism, 3) impurity and evil, and 4) isolationism, according to Boccaccini. The particular interpretations of these four themes at Qumran combine with the overall non-conformist, Enochic priestly tradition and Zadokite influence, to portray a sectarian picture of the textual evidence. In the end, Boccaccini claims that Qumran sectarian documents are not only unique to



Qumran but “had no significant impact on mainstream Rabbinic Judaism” (158). Fundamentally, “systemic analysis leads to the overall conclusion that the community of the Dead Sea Scrolls was a radical and minority group within Enochic Judaism” (162).

For Boccaccini, although the Essene Hypothesis should be taken as conclusive, it has failed to clarify the relationship of Qumran Essenism to mainstream Essenism. According to Boccaccini, the Enochic/Essene Hypothesis more firmly grounds and further explains discrepancies in the Essene Hypothesis by allowing for the recognition that “the Qumran library comprised not only the documents of a marginal sectarian community but also a substantial body of Essene literature from the second temple period, independent of Qumran” (196).

There is much in this book that is impossible to treat in detail within this review. For the potential reader, it is important to note Boccaccini’s determined approach and art of synthesis of a complex set of literature. For Boccaccini, Enochic Judaism becomes a product of the transitional age of middle Judaism. As a product, Enochic Judaism, transitioned into Essenism and its offshoots, is fundamental, for Boccaccini, to our understanding of the Qumran literary corpus.

C. Jason Borders, Brunel University/London Bible College

James Montgomery Boice and Philip Graham Ryken. *The Doctrines of Grace: Rediscovering the Evangelical Gospel*. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway Books, 2002. 240 pp, \$17.99.

The mere reference of Reformed Theology to some may cause a shudder and the unsheathing of spiritual weapons while drawing distinct lines in the sand of theology ready to do battle. No doubt, for the reader skeptical of Reformed Theology, *The Doctrines of Grace* may in fact renew the feelings of disdain towards the heritage of Luther, Calvin, Kuyper, and now Boice. But for those bathed in the reformed heritage of the doctrines of grace, Dr. Boice’s words will ring true to the heart of their passions.

Dr. James Montgomery Boice lobbed the first shot into the playground of theology with the prologue to this book titled, *Whatever Happened to the Gospel of Grace? Recovering the Doctrines That Shook the World*. He asked where the true gospel of grace from beginning to end went to and why the church needs to reclaim this great truth of Scripture. In *The Doctrines of Grace*, Dr. Boice and Philip Graham Ryken, who completed the composition following the death of Dr. Boice, again riles the feathers of many within the evangelical community by delivering a blistering, yet sobering, critique of the status of today’s evangelical church.

*The Doctrines of Grace* is unapologetically polemic, laying Calvinism over and against Arminianism, laying the foundation that Calvinism is, in fact, good for the church and that Arminianism generally leads to the pathway into liberalism. *The Doctrines of Grace* is broken down into three main pillars: The Doctrines of Grace, The Five Points, and Rediscovering God’s Grace. The first pillar is largely historical, both in its detailed description of the lineage reformed theology carries as well as the timeline of discussions that developed what are known as the “five points of Calvinism.” The historical synopsis

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of the events through history are found to be clearly laid out and fair in both its criticism and affirmation of both traditions, reformed and arminian. The polemic nature of the book is noticed immediately as it begins its assessment of the current trends of evangelicalism by observing that the church has “supplanted the plain teaching of Scripture with entertainment, group therapy, political activism, Signs and Wonders – anything that promises to appeal to religious consumers”(20). Dr. Boice asks the church to consider, instead of catering to “man-focused” operatives of salvation: “If we are actually dead in our sins (radical depravity), then only God could choose us in Christ (unconditional election), only Christ could atone for our sins (particular redemption), and only the Spirit could draw us to Christ (efficacious grace) and preserve us in Him (preserving grace)” (33).

The core of *The Doctrines of Grace* is found in the second pillar where the traditional “five points of Calvinism” are clearly laid out in five separate chapters. The book follows the traditional TULIP acronym of total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and perseverance of the saints. Dr. Boice generally follows a method of introducing the doctrine, supporting the particular doctrine through Scripture, observing the historical development of the doctrine, and then handling objections raised throughout history. Considerable literature has been published, from short booklets to voluminous dogmatics, in affirmation on these five foundations of the reformed faith. *The Doctrines of Grace* should join the short list of resources on any theologian’s bookshelf when referring to a clear and biblical explanation of the doctrines of grace.

The final section of *The Doctrines of Grace* strikes to the heart of what Dr. Boice and his successor at Tenth Presbyterian Church Philip Ryken, have desired to convey – rediscovering the whole life called by those who live the doctrines of grace. The text breaks down into two sections – “the True Calvinist” and “Calvinism at Work.” In the “True Calvinist,” Isaiah 6 is used as a backdrop to walking through the life of a Calvinist committed to more than just theological dogmatics, desiring to carry out in all of one’s life their chief end which is to glorify God. The book states this is accomplished through receiving a God-centered mind, penitent spirit, grateful heart, submissive will, holy living, and living with a glorious purpose. “Calvinism at work” can often read like a biography of Tenth Presbyterian Church’s humanitarian work in Philadelphia, where it is located. In the midst of the listing of Dr. Boice’s ministry gifts to the city, one great principle is proclaimed – true Calvinism at work should be “biblically based, theologically rigorous Calvinism that is also practically minded and kindly hearted (12).”

In the final section of his book, Dr. Boice produces a definitive masterpiece in fleshing out the implications for ministry when adhering to the doctrines of grace. Those who seek to discredit the doctrines of grace as well as those who hold dearly to the doctrines and need a shot in the arm for ministry would do well to carefully read the true workings of a Calvinist witnessed in Dr. Boice and his successor, who are committed to mercy and evangelism through truthful teaching grounded in the grace of God from beginning to end.

Bradley L Selan

Peter Jensen, *The Revelation of God*. (Contours of Christian Theology; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002). 208 pp., paperback, \$17.00.

*The Revelation of God* by Peter Jensen, is a refreshing and balanced discussion of key themes related to revelation. Formerly principal of Moore Theological College (Sydney), Jensen has composed a carefully thought-out volume, superbly organized and well written.

Jensen sees the gospel of Jesus Christ as "the indispensable way to the knowledge of God." It is therefore the revelation by which everything else that claims to deliver knowledge of God must be assessed and interpreted." Furthermore, he contends this gospel bears information about God, his person and plans, that could not be obtained from any other source.

He explores a wide range of implications of this viewpoint. For him, this comprehensive emphasis on the gospel of Christ includes recognition of what Christ said, what he did, and who he is. Jensen's focus on the gospel does not limit itself to New Testament considerations. His stress on the gospel, for example, recognizes the tie-in with the Old Testament (especially its covenantal features) and thereby preserves the unity of the whole scriptural revelation.

Concentration on the revelatory aspects of the gospel is the key feature of Jensen's extensive treatment. Although he acknowledges (minor) elements of truth in other approaches to God, Jensen avoids their weaknesses. The focus and main attention, accordingly, are directed away from such avenues as natural theology (including philosophical "proofs") and religious experience. Priority, he suggests, must be given to the gospel as the "interpretative grid" for all revelatory knowledge and authentic experience.

Under Jensen's keen observation, it is the gospel that provides the indispensable "instrument by which we come to know God" and also the framework for interpreting what God is doing in human experience. And, he maintains, it does far more than that. It furnishes the moral compass that guides our personal trust, our practical living, and moral decision-making.

From this reviewer's viewpoint, Jensen's acceptance of biblical inerrancy appears somewhat less than enthusiastic. To adopt inerrancy --- and he definitely does --- on the basis of better consistency with his firm assent to infallibility seems rather weak. Inerrancy, of course, can be embraced on the warrant of the factual situation --- supporting scriptural citations including statements by Christ himself; absence of confirmed error; etc. This latter approach would have given Jensen a more convincing case for its merits than subscribing to it as a deductive spin-off from infallibility.

Nevertheless, any shortcomings in Jensen's work are outweighed by the many strengths of this excellent volume. To have highlighted, as he does, the focus of God's revelatory thrust in the gospel itself is a correct assessment, a faithful rendering of the epistemic and scriptural realities.



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In scope and quality of analysis, this book earns a place alongside such works as Benjamin Warfield's *Revelation and Inspiration*, Carl Henry's *God, Revelation and Authority*, Bernard Ramm's *Special Revelation and the Word of God*, and James Packer's *God Has Spoken*. Jensen has given us a rich collection of insights into God's revelatory promises which have been inscripturated in a unified, trustworthy Bible.

This book fully deserves an attentive reading. Written clearly, it can be beneficial to both the discerning layperson and the scholar.

John Y. May, Retired, University of Pittsburgh

Serene Jones, *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology: Cartographies of Grace*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000. 214 pp., \$17.00.

*Feminist Theory and Christian Theology* by Serene Jones is part of the series, Guides to Theological Inquiry. This is a helpful series which introduces the reader to a variety of issues in contemporary theology. Jones' purpose is to map out, through the image of cartography, the terrain of Christian theology with an overlay of feminist theory. Her goal is not to reconstruct a new theology for the Christian church, but "to provide markers for traveling through the terrain in new ways" (p. 19) that will sensitize us to the new contours of our theological maps. The "signposts" along the map she presents come to us through her use of Reformed theology, via Calvin and Luther, feminist theory, and her own location as Associate Professor of Theology at Yale Divinity School. These, along with her reflections on the actual experiences of women, serve to provide a useful introduction to feminist theory and theology for a first time reader.

After defining her terms and articulating her purposes in chapter one, Jones moves on to the substance of her work in *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology*. She tackles three doctrinal issues in Christian theology: soteriology, sin, and ecclesiology. In a dyadic structure, Jones devotes two chapters to each topic. First, she presents various aspects of feminist theory in a succinct manner. In particular, she uses feminist theory in chapters two, four and six to expand the reader's understanding of the debates concerning women's nature (essentialist versus constructed), the nature of women's oppression, and the potential loss of women's agency in the "public/private" divide of both liberalism and communitarianism. These chapters provide a good initiation to feminist theory, while at the same time, highlighting the debates and disagreements within feminism.

Second in the dyadic structure are chapters three, five and seven where Jones overlays feminist theory on soteriology, sin and ecclesiology. In doing so, Jones attempts to highlight how these doctrines may be "remapped" to take into consideration the insights from feminist theory on women's nature, sin as oppression, and women's agency and identity in community. What will likely be most surprising to the reader is Jones' favorable treatment of Calvin and Luther who are often caricatured as "anti-woman," with certain justification. Jones recovers aspects of Calvin that may be more amenable and complementary to feminist theory. In particular, Jones remaps Calvin's



understanding of sin as "unfaithfulness" and "total depravity" to account for the realities of the loss of women's gifts and potentiality as divine images and a depraved social order that uses power to oppress women (chapter three), enabling us to name oppression as sin. Jones recovers Calvin's image of "the Church as Mother" (chapter seven) in her remapping of the church as a community of "bounded openness" where lives are shared and restored in a community bonded together which invites others in. Jones criticizes Calvin for bifurcating justification and sanctification in chapter two of her discussions of salvation. Jones' recovery is a reversal, an emphasis on sanctification which tells the story of God's mercy and grace in order to give women a sense of agency and substance on which to be judged which is lacking in a juridical understanding of justification (p. 63). It seems that Jones bifurcates justification and sanctification in the opposite direction by continuing to separate the two. Perhaps a good dose of a Wesleyan synthesis between justification and sanctification may be a more apt response for linking righteousness and justification with moral agency in sanctification. Chapter two was a provocative reminder that, historically and theologically, a Wesleyan theological framework has tended to be more welcoming and favorable for the moral agency, gifting, and empowerment of women.

*Feminist Theory and Christian Theology: Cartographies of Grace* is a good introduction to the ways in which feminist theory can both amplify and challenge theology. Jones' book is based on the assumption that doctrines "do more than simply provide Christians with propositional statements or static rules. Doctrines serve as imaginative lenses through which to view the world" (p. 16). While not everyone will agree with the imaginative lenses, conclusions and practices that Jones proposes in her cartography of theology, certainly most will agree that we are all involved to a degree in the new contours of Christian theology if we, like Jones, are situated "within the work of a long line of theologians who have shared in the critical task of helping the church reflect on its present-day witness and practice to see if it continues to be faithful to the revelation of God manifest in Scripture, tradition, and the ongoing life of the Christian community" (p. 11).

Wyndy Corbin

John MacArthur, *The Battle for the Beginning: Creation Evolution and the Bible*. Nashville, TN: W Publishing Group, 2001. 237 pp. \$15.39

How were we created and why? Have you ever wondered how the Bible answers these questions or wanted to know what to tell someone who wants to know? Or are you the type of person that is interested in apologetics of the Christian faith? If so, then *The Battle for the Beginning: Creation, Evolution and the Bible* by John MacArthur is the book for you.

In this ten-chapter book, John MacArthur addresses the debate concerning creation vs. evolution in a Bible-centered and bold fashion that has come to characterize both his preaching and writing. Those who are familiar with and enjoy writing will find it an informative, stirring, and an enjoyable read. Those who possess questions

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concerning Christianity and the rationale behind its views about creation, are new to the faith, or new to MacArthur will find it a refreshingly thorough and thoughtful explanation of the rationale of the Bible's understanding of creation. He covers the creation study as found in Genesis chapters 1-3 in an expository method that has come to characterize his teaching. As he covers these chapters, he attacks incorrect thinking of schools of thought opposed to the creation narrative of the Bible such as the naturalists and "Big Bang" theorists who believe that the creation account of the beginning of the world is irrational because it is faith-based. He argues that all these schools who claim to be correct because they are not faith-based are not correct. The fact is that they are very much faith based and rationally errant, while the Bible's account of the creation is faith-based and completely accurate. He makes this statement,

It is nonetheless interesting and ironic that secular physicists trying to explain the origin of the earth on purely scientific principles face a similar dilemma. Scientists who hold to the big bang theory must explain how a universe full of matter appeared out of nowhere in an instant....no theory about the origin of the universe is tenable without an all-wise and all-powerful Creator...Why should we reinterpret the clear statements of Scripture and try to turn this into an ages-long evolutionary process? Why cannot we simply take God at His word?" (p. 93&94).

Therefore, he concludes that the Bible's account of the creation narrative as found in Genesis chapters 1-3 is the only one that can be held as completely true by a truly rational individual.

The book's content is academic in nature, but MacArthur's writing style makes it understandable and enjoyable to those who do not walk the campuses of seminaries as well. It is a thorough and very good explanation of the debate that surrounds the beginning of creation and the truth of the Bible's account. It should be on the shelves of seminary libraries throughout the nation.

Tim Monteith

Donald K. McKim, *Introducing the Reformed Faith: Biblical Revelation, Christian Tradition, Contemporary Significance* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001). 261 pages, paper, \$27.95.

The name 'Donald McKim' has become synonymous with 'accessible reference works in the Reformed tradition' in Presbyterian circles in North America. If you look on the shelf of many a Canadian or American Presbyterian pastor, you will probably find at least a couple of books written or edited by McKim. With *Introducing the Reformed Faith*, he has not let us down. This is one of the most readable and commendable books on the Reformed tradition that I have ever read. Were I not Presbyterian myself, reading this book would make me think very seriously about

becoming one! The book helps to make clear that, as McKim states in the introduction, "The Reformed faith is a faith of *living people*" (emphasis his).

There are nineteen chapters in this volume, the first sixteen of which deal with major topics of interest in the Reformed tradition. It is, in many ways, laid out like a systematic theology, beginning with Scripture and ending with the end times. McKim opens the book with suggested ways to use it, either as a study for an individual or for groups. He also suggests that one could read only the text, or the text and the endnotes. The endnotes are somewhat voluminous in themselves (50 pages of somewhat fine print), but give insights that, for many readers, are helpful. These include word origins, quotations from scholars, historical notes, and citations that help to clarify the points he makes in the book. That being said, one could read only the text itself and still be greatly edified.

Each chapter is laid out just as the subtitle of the book states: biblical revelation, Christian tradition, contemporary significance. As part of the "Christian tradition" section, each chapter has a "Reformed emphases" subheading, in which McKim makes clear where Christians in the Reformed tradition tend to stand on the matter being discussed. Here, he often will cite a creed or statement of faith from the Reformed tradition. He is careful to note that there is not unanimity among Reformed believers on all matters, and he explains, where appropriate, what some of the different opinions are among the various strands of the Reformed tradition. Each chapter concludes with "Questions for reflection", which are useful both for group and individual study.

McKim uses a number of "big" words, which he defines well, making the book accessible to anyone with a secondary school education. He is very committed to the use of inclusive language, which sometimes makes the grammar awkward. Many of his illustrations are from his own experience in the United States, which do not always resonate with a Canadian reader (for instance, the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy in the 1920s was highlighted by more than the Scopes trial!) Still, I would not hesitate to hand this book to an informed seeker who desires to learn more about the Reformed tradition, provided the seeker would sit down to discuss each chapter with me as she or he read. If one has spent one's whole life in a different theological or ecclesiastical tradition, reading this book all at once, without an opportunity for verbal reflection, could be somewhat overbearing.

Some might suggest that in this relatively small book, McKim has attempted to conquer Rome. True, he aims high, and covers all of his bases quite well. The only pitfall I noticed in this midst of this was the common problem of glossing over some issues that probably deserved a more lengthy treatment. He remedies this in the endnotes by giving numerous citations of sources in which the issue at hand can be explored much more deeply.

The 'nice touches' in this book come near the end. McKim spends chapter 17 citing other Reformed scholars, some of whom came up with different emphases for the Reformed tradition than this book shows. He cites the work of A.A. Hodge, the late scholar of Princeton; John H. Leith, of Union Seminary in Virginia; as well as I. John Hesselink and Jack Rogers. In chapter 18, McKim answers some common questions

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about the Reformed tradition, questions I am asked often. It is in this (sadly) short chapter that he addresses, in only four paragraphs, one of my passions about the tradition, which is church government. The nineteenth chapter is a 52-question (one for each week of a year) catechism, which McKim prepared to be "Reformed and ecumenical" (p. 186). It, too, is a useful tool. Following this is a list of Presbyterian and Reformed churches known to exist in Canada and the United States. Recognizing that his approach is not the only approach by which to understand the Reformed tradition, he lists comparative sources near the end of the book to give the very curious some additional reading.

As I constantly am updating my curriculum for teaching newcomers to my congregation about the Reformed tradition, I will use this book as a source, and will surely wear it out in a short time due to the number of times I will turn back to it for reference. For the believer in the Reformed tradition or outside the tradition, it is a book well worth reading.

Jeffrey F. Loach

Leon J. Podles, *The Church Impotent: The Feminization of Christianity*. Dallas: Spence, 1999. xviii + 288 pp, paper, \$10.77.

Leon Podles' book might easily be dismissed by Evangelicals as one of the more bizarre entries in the male/female leadership debate. Such a dismissal would be entirely understandable. Podles' view of Scripture fluctuates. Most of his discussion treats the text as reliable, but, when he does comment on origins, he contends: "The main books of the Old Testament took their canonical form in the midst of the Exile" (65). "The writer of Genesis" blamed the exile on "a flaw in the relationship of man and woman. This flaw was projected back to the very beginning of history" (64). Few Evangelicals would posit a pool of authors shaping the Genesis account of Adam and Eve to explain the exile. And few should be comfortable with his New Testament theory that the gospels were written as apologies to the Romans and "therefore the Jews, for whom the Romans felt no special affection, were the enemies given most prominence" (81). Problematic, too, is his contention the Holy Spirit is "'the reciprocal love between the Father and Son'" which "becomes itself a person" when that love "'attains fullness" (85).

His main argument that sex does not equal masculinity/femininity, sex and gender being different, and, therefore, the Persons of the Trinity are masculine, but not male, while their unity is feminine, but not female, is at best circular. It rests on an inductive sexual observation - men separate, women unite or commune - which is posited back into the supposedly non-sexual Godhead. Such reasoning triggers implications Podles would very much not want; for example, at the moment of this review a transgendered candidate is petitioning a denomination in our vicinity using the same basic argument sex does not equal gender, contending his sex is male, his gender identity female, so he has had himself scientifically adjusted. While his argument is no stronger than Podles', it does make a reader question the logic of the underlying theory of the book:



Why use the term gender when sex is explicitly not involved? Why ask whether God is masculine or feminine, positing definitions back to God drawn from human behavior? Such a procedure is similar to asking what race God is (Is God white or black?) by basing one's discussion on current socio-anthropological or ethnographic descriptions of races. The great Marcus Garvey objected to just such reasoning: "Our God has no color, yet it is human to see everything through one's own spectacles, and since the white people have seen God through white spectacles, we have only now started out (late though it be) to see our God through our own spectacles" (*Philosophy and Opinions*, 1:44). One could paraphrase: "While our God has no sex, yet it is human to see everything through one's own spectacles of gender, so we men posit God as masculine (and disagree with feminists who label God as feminine...)." But, with gendered language not consistent in ancient Hebrew and Greek for all 3 persons of the Trinity, and verses explicitly resisting identifying God with such categories (e.g. Deut 4:15-16, Mark 12:25), why do it? Why is God not supragenderal? As God is not Jewish, though God worked powerfully through the Jews, God need not be labeled masculine to work powerfully through males. This point underscores a series of inconsistencies in Podles' methodology. For example, he uses the gender based language argument to claim masculinity for the Father and Son, but ignores gendered language in his discussion of the Spirit (the Spirit is feminine in Hebrew, neuter in Greek). He also avoids discussing the obvious objection against gender-based language having true universal gender references (e.g. how is a "year" feminine and a "day" masculine in Hebrew? How are a "year" neuter and a "day" feminine in Greek)? Other inconsistencies include explaining Jesus choosing only male disciples "to spare women that burden" of martyrdom (79), while commenting eight pages later "the sacraments have always been open to women, as has martyrdom" (87). Finally, a heavy dose of Roman Catholicism (e.g. "Mary is the mother of the Church", 85) might close out Evangelical interest in this book altogether. But such dismissal would be a mistake. This last part, the heavy Roman Catholic nature of the book, is actually its strength and its real contribution.

Leon Podles himself was a Roman Catholic pre-seminarian who dropped out of seminary because of the endemic, rampant homosexuality (x). Given the recent high profile Roman Catholic scandals (especially currently in Boston with Paul Shanley and the embattled Cardinal Law), the book becomes more than simply a heterodox offering in the seemingly endless debate on female leadership, this time on the complementarian side. Podles' complaints in the final analysis are essentially about the "homosexualizing" of Christianity through the "feminizing" of it. In other words, this is not a simple recruit in the firing lines of the current Evangelical in-house debate. It is much more: a critique of the legacy of historic Catholicism with an impassioned plea that Evangelicals not follow its errors.

One does not need to accept all his bio/psycho-speak postmodern theom mythology to realize that Roman Catholic theology and practice are in deep trouble in its high incidence of pederasty among its ordained leadership. Neither should we be put off by his English professor's penchant for hyperbole ("The Methodist Church is a women's club at prayer" [xv] or "*Christianity Today* has made as many compromises as it can with feminism and ignores the problem of the lack of men in the church" [xv]) to

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recognize this is a hurting man who is delivering a serious warning. If we take into account the context out of which Podles is writing, Evangelicals on either side of the women's leadership debate can learn something useful.

When he addresses the issue of homosexuality he can provide provocative insights (e.g. 70-71). Refreshing is his break with the usual man is active, woman is passive mythology and particularly enlightening is his analysis of the origin of that chestnut, the Aristotelian revival in medieval scholastic thinking with its bridal and maternal theology (102ff). His helpful detailing of the shifting of the bride of Christ imagery from the collective to the individual explains the disenfranchisement of men from the Church (and also enlightened me personally why, since early puberty, if not before, I have always loathed the hymn "In the Garden" and Warner Sallman's "bearded lady" picture of Christ). His final plea that brotherly love be salvaged from sexual aberration so that churches can create a safe place to grow our sons healthfully into holy men is a concern all of us need to take to heart.

Like Ezekiel lying down on his sides for 390 and 40 days respectively to gain attention for his points (Ezek 4:4-6), Professor Podles' approach may appear at times to be a strange one, but his warning is timely and serious.

William David Spencer, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

R. C. Sproul, *Saved from What?* Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2002. 128 pp, \$15.00.

As a young professor of theology in 1969, R. C. Sproul was approached by a stranger on campus and asked, "Are you saved?" *Saved from What?* is not just his pithy answer, but the title to one of R.C. Sproul's latest books. After collecting himself from this unusual answer, the stranger then tried to present the gospel to Sproul, but he lacked the "understanding of what salvation is (p.14)." Bothered by this encounter, Sproul decided to conduct a small, informal survey about salvation at a Christian bookseller's convention. He discovered only one person sufficiently answered the definition of salvation out of a hundred participants.

The dialogue with that stranger and the informal survey led Sproul to write this book and produce a compact, yet comprehensive text on salvation. "Shocked by the apparent ignorance of the most elementary article of Christianity (p.15)," Sproul sets out to enlighten the unaware that "we need to be saved from God (p.25)." In eight short chapters, Sproul concentrates on the theology of salvation and humanity's desperate need to know where salvation comes from and through what means we receive it.

The first two chapters discuss different biblical words for salvation and the total depravity of man. Chapter three hits the core of why we need another book on salvation; today's culture, both Christian and secular, ignores why Jesus died on the cross. Sproul risks offending colleagues by pointing out how Christian bookstores aren't any different than secular ones and how they "offer precious little literature on the cross of Christ (p.45)." He continues by pointing out how many people are oblivious of the fact that they are accountable to God for their sins. Postmodernism negates individual

responsibility in America and the word sin left the mainstream language long ago. Sproul takes a fundamental stand of getting back to the basics of preaching the cross.

The next few chapters involve basic training for understanding salvation theology. Sproul explains theological words like substitution, satisfaction, expiation and propitiation. His strong reformed views especially emerge in chapter six concerning God's covenant and atonement. His elaboration of covenantal blessings and curses is very thought provoking about God's relationship with his people, past and present. The book ends with the chapter dedicated to the eternal reward for accepting God's salvation. "Adoption and the beatific vision (p.103)" reminds the readers that the Christian's focus should aptly be directed toward Jesus and our eternal home.

Sproul presents salvation thoroughly and compactly. He is comprehensive in his definitions on views of sin and salvation. The book could equal a semester or two of seminary theology. He also remains relevant with appropriate examples easy to identify with, like using money illustrations to describe sin as debt and ransom and simple diagrams to typify justification. Sproul's passion and concern for the true gospel message is evident and meaningful. His observations do not come off judgmental or condescending toward contemporary Christianity, but more of a convincing nudge. This effort echoes that of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's thoughts and concerns of "cheap grace" from his book, *The Cost of Discipleship*. At the present time, it seems vital to remember that Christ dying on the cross was for more than the freedom to wear WWJD bracelets and have a good self-image. Sproul drives that point home effectively. *Saved from What* ultimately reminds people why the truth of salvation is so important. As Sproul summarizes at the end of the book, "It is a salvation that is by God, from God and for God."

As competent as this book is, a subtle dilemma arises in the intended audience. Sproul and the ministry he founded, Ligonier ministries, typically write to educate and challenge the laity with scholastic books and resources. The church laity would greatly benefit from this book and Sproul's personal anecdotes are very endearing, but it is rather dense for the casual reader at times. He might be requiring too much from lay readers, but then again that might be his point. As for the seminarian or professor, the majority of the book would be review. However, Sproul offers several examples and insight that aren't necessarily covered in theology class, like useful biblical references and informative facts on Luther and Calvin that would aid any pastor. *Saved from What?* is a well written, inspiring book for both lay person and seminarian alike and deftly provides the answer to the question, "Are you saved?"

Tally Whitehead

Sarah Sumner. *Men and Women in the Church*. InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove IL. 2003. 332 pp, paper, \$17.00.

Sarah Sumner received her graduate training at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Chicago and is a professor of theology at Azusa Pacific University in California. She is a woman in ministry who holds a high view of scripture. The subtitle



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for this book reflects an important and often ignored goal, "Building Consensus on Christian Leadership." It is an effort to find some middle ground in the current debate between the Complementarian and Egalitarian positions regarding women in ministry. She refuses to take a stand in either 'camp.' Her book combines stories of her own experience as a woman called into ministry with theological discussions of various biblical texts and church tradition. Dr. Sumner critiques both positions being debated among conservative Christian scholars and then often offers a third alternative.

This book will unsettle those on both sides of the debate, and she calls on both to acknowledge their biases and the issues they would rather not mention. Readers are asked to acknowledge the underlying (and on-going) tradition of perceiving women as inferior or, conversely, ignoring the differences between the genders. She calls on Complementarians to allow women to hold men accountable for their leadership. Much of Sumner's book is well reasoned and will certainly be an encouragement to women in ministry especially if they are involved in very conservative or traditional churches.

I did find her book problematic in a number of ways. Sumner is unwilling to be labeled a 'feminist.' Even being a 'biblical feminist' is outside her comfort zone. Her reasoning is that to be feminist requires one to supercede the gospel with the agenda of women's rights, equality, and justice. I find this to be a false dichotomy. Martin Luther King did not supercede the gospel when he made racial equality and justice his life work. It was in fact the gospel and his life experience that prompted him to pursue those and overturn a system that was militating against African Americans in our society. Although Sumner states that a new paradigm needs to replace the old one, she does not address the need to change the social system that militates against women in the church. She suggests women should respond to a call to ministry as Queen Esther did who approached the king (stepped out in ministry) when it was against convention. Meanwhile the rules and conventions that made her action risky remain in place. Sumner makes much of the inappropriateness of women claiming the "right" to lead or teach in the church but fails to understand that it is a right to simply have the *opportunity* rather than be categorically denied access to those roles based on gender. It is a 'right' that men have always had.

Sumner enters the debate over the meaning of several of the more difficult New Testament passages including the word "head" in 1 Corinthians 11:3 and the translation of "submit" in Ephesians 5:21-22 and understanding 1 Timothy 2:9-14. Her desire to build consensus leads her at times to leave room for both egalitarian and complementarian interpretations so she often rejects other current solutions, though her own arguments are not compelling. For example, when treating Ephesians 5:21-22 Sumner's effort to stay in the middle is weakened when she acknowledges that the verb "submit" occurs only once and thus requires "wives to your husband" to connect to the previous statement "submit yourselves one to another." The grammatical structure bolsters the argument that in the mind of the author of Ephesians these ideas were connected and not separate concepts.

In addition Sumner fails in the rest of this section (Eph 5:23-33) and again in 1 Timothy 2 to consider the cultural issues affecting these texts. In 1st Timothy she



hypothesizes about specific issues regarding church order within that congregation but does not mention broader cultural influences. Even though she has read William Webb's book on cultural hermeneutics [reviewed elsewhere in this issue] she uses a static hermeneutic – not considering the patriarchy, educational differences, etc. inherent in the understanding of gender relationships in the first century.

At certain points this book is quite useful. Sumner reviews the early church fathers' negative opinions of women and the effect tradition has had on interpretation of scripture and the practices of the church, but she is inconsistent in considering the cultural influences on the Bible. She knows there is a preponderance of masculine language but dismisses any negative effect it may have since the text is inspired. This is too simplistic a response to a significant issue for any woman seeking to understand her place in the church. I believe Sumner's contribution will continue to further the discussion towards a more helpful paradigm for women and men in the church but her own solutions are not sufficient for the task.

Donna Laird

Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *First Theology: God, Scripture and Hermeneutics*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002. 384 pp., paper, \$25.00.

In an attempt to confront the challenges which postmodern literary criticism has presented to the reading and interpretation of the Bible, as well as all texts, Kevin Vanhoozer, Research Professor of Systematic Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, presents a proposal through a series of essays that comprise *First Theology: God, Scripture and Hermeneutics*, for meeting these challenges. The primary challenge, according to Vanhoozer, is the shifting of meaning from the words, narratives and authorial intent of biblical texts to the interpreters of texts and their social contexts, who ascribe meaning to words and narratives. Therefore, we are left with the question, "what makes one interpretation better than any other?" (p. 23).

Vanhoozer utilizes, modifies and subverts certain arguments of postmodern literary criticism and communication theory in addressing these challenges. He concedes to the postmodern claim that all persons have presuppositions which function as interpretive grids in hermeneutics. His proposal, then, is that we view "God, Scripture and hermeneutics as one problem" (p. 9). Vanhoozer refers to this as the task of "first theology," or a theologically informed hermeneutic which "recognizes our doctrine of God affects the way we interpret the Scriptures, while simultaneously acknowledging that our interpretation of Scripture affects our doctrine of God" (p. 10). In lieu of addressing each topic, God, Scripture and hermeneutics, as separate topics, as is typical in most standard presentations of systematic theology and biblical studies in an evangelical context, we ought to link them so that our view of Scripture as revelation flows from an understanding of the God who speaks through divine-human interaction, and who can, therefore, be understood. This should be our "first theology" and primary hermeneutical assumption about God.

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Vanhoozer takes on the challenges of speech-act communication theory. While never explicitly defining speech-action theory, communicative discourse ethics, and the various components of linguistic theory as articulated through continental philosophers such as Jürgen Habermas and Ludwig Wittgenstein, Vanhoozer utilizes the concepts of speech-actions in his understanding of the relationship between God, Scripture and hermeneutics by focusing on the way in which language is used as the action of the communicator to elicit response. His premise is that "Scripture is neither simply the recital of the acts of God nor merely a book of inert propositions. Scripture is composed of divine-human speech acts that, through what they say, accomplish several cognitive, spiritual and social functions" (p. 131). God, speaking through Scripture, has accomplished what God intended. Vanhoozer proposes a Trinitarian model for understanding how God's speech in Scripture produces the results which God desires. This "trinitarian theology of holy Scripture" (p. 154) involves the locution of the Father, the illocution of the Son, and the perlocutionary effects of the Spirit (pp. 154-157). The Father speaks ("locution") through the human authors of Scripture; the Son, the *Logos*, is the reality called into existence ("illocution") by the Father's locution; and the Spirit effects the results ("perlocution") which the Father intended in speaking by convicting and illuminating the reader as to the reality of the Son, resulting in "belief, obedience, praise or some other" (p. 155).

Vanhoozer's work, while dense and presumptive of the reader's familiarity and grasp of current trends in literary theory, does answer the question, "what makes one interpretation better than any other?" from his own theological and hermeneutical location. Vanhoozer remains moored to his Reformed roots since his "trinitarian theology of holy scripture" purports to be a recovery of the Reformed understanding of the interaction between Word and Spirit effecting God's desired results, starting with salvation (chapter 7). Vanhoozer also retains a commitment to the primacy of authorial intent in hermeneutics, which signals that much of his book aims to defend this hermeneutical strategy utilized by many evangelicals at the expense of a much needed nuanced understanding of how the social location of the interpreter, primarily evangelicals, influences our interpretation of the Bible. Therefore, "what makes one interpretation better than any other?" are the intentions of the authors of texts. In the act of communicating, they had intentions of being understood; understanding what they meant is the task of hermeneutics. To discount their authorial intentions is paramount to an act of injustice, according to Vanhoozer, by ascribing meaning (or no meaning) they never intended to their words, or deconstructing the text to such a degree that "the sense of the text is undone, doomed to wander like a shade through the rubble of signifiers that signify nothing" (p. 232). *First Theology* is worth the read simply for a new way to understand the ethical dimensions of the hermeneutical task. It is one we should approach with humility and with the theological virtues of "*faith*, that there is a real presence, a voice, a meaning in the text; *hope* that the interpretive community can, in the

power of the Spirit, attain an adequate, not absolute understanding; *love*, a mutual relation of self-giving between text and reader" (p. 231).

Wyndy Corbin

Philip Yancey, *Reaching for the Invisible God*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000. 301 pp., \$16.99.

Philip Yancey refers to himself as an artist seeking to communicate. He does this daily as the editor of "Christianity Today" magazine and as an intriguing, thought-provoking author of several books about difficult subjects ranging from faith to pain. He has asked questions that few are willing to ask, such as "Where is God when it hurts"? His boldness has made him an award winning author. Two of his books, *The Jesus I Never Knew*, and *What's So Amazing About Grace?* have won the Book of the Year award. *Reaching for the Invisible God* follows in the style of his other great books and is certain to help the reader examine his/her faith and relationship to God. This book is written from the perspective of Yancey's spiritual journey from doubt and disillusionment to faith.

Have you ever doubted God's existence or thought about what He means to you? *Reaching for the Invisible God* helps examine these issues by asking the difficult question, "How do you have a relationship with an invisible God"? Yancey answers this by saying that one must exercise faith just to know that He exists and that by God's very nature people will have doubts, which often partner with faith. By examining them, there is opportunity for faith to grow. Because of God's love for us, he permits these doubts. He yearns for a personal relationship with each of us. Truly grasping this relationship affects everything that the believer does in his/her life.

Examining faith and one's spiritual journey raises many other issues. Yancey writes that faith in God requires both patience and hope: patience in remembering past blessings and hope that faith is worth the risk. It requires surrendering to God and having a desire to please Him. Yancey says that "living for God alone involves a radical reorientation, a stripping away of anything that might lure me from the primary goal of pleasing God. Living in faith involves me pleasing God, far more than God pleasing me." (p. 82)

The reader's spiritual journey can be strengthened through Yancey's accounts of biblical characters like Peter who asked Jesus to help him with his unbelief, Paul who wrote, "Suffering produces perseverance, perseverance, character, and character, hope" and Jesus who told the woman seeking healing that her faith made her well. It is encouraging to know that great fathers of the faith like Martin Luther, Richard Baxter, and Dwight L. Moody struggled. Luther struggled with depression; Baxter's faith was based on probabilities not certainties; and Moody's application to join a church in Boston was almost denied due to his uncertain faith. God will work with the faith that we have if we allow Him to do so.

I recommend this book to anybody interested in having a more intimate relationship with God. Yancey engages the reader through his writings about real life

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experiences. He also encourages seekers by looking at the lives of biblical heroes like David, Job, and Jonah who struggled and at times failed to obey God. Yancey begins and ends each chapter with thought-provoking quotes from famous people. Reading *Reaching for the Invisible God* will strengthen each reader's walk with God by encouraging him/her to think about faith and how God affects his/her life.

Ellen Clodfelter

George J. Zemek, *A Biblical Theology of the Doctrines of Sovereign Grace: Exegetical Considerations of Key Anthropological, Hamartiological and Soteriological Terms and Motifs*. Marge, FL: Zemek Books, 2002. 277 pages. Pb Free upon request.

*A Biblical Theology of the Doctrines of Sovereign Grace* is a good volume on the doctrines of man, sin, salvation and sanctification. It is concise and well organized, but since it is written as a review of Anthropological, Hamartiological and Soteriological terms and motifs from a scholarly standpoint, it may be difficult for a lay person to comprehend.

The author, George J. Zemek, possesses both the experience and education required to write such a work. He received a doctorate of theology at Grace Theological Seminary. From 1965 to 1978 he was professor of biblical languages, theology and apologetics and from 1985 to 1988 he was the seminary's director of doctoral studies. Beginning in 1988 he taught for six years at The Master's Seminary in Sun Valley, California. He is also the founding pastor-teacher of Grace Bible Church and Training Center in Brandon, Florida.

The book is divided into three parts – each focusing on one of the three motifs of the book. Each chapter begins with a section that focuses on key Hebrew and Greek terms necessary for comprehending the doctrine in question. Consequentially, a theological statement of the doctrine follows each of these sections. The book is concluded by a series of appendices, most of which richly supplement the main discourse.

A person who strive to rightly handle the word of truth, will appreciate how Zemek avoids twisting the truth of Scripture with preconceived notions or by trying to force them into a specific theological camp. This is avoided by referencing Scripture on nearly every page and testing Scripture with Scripture. He also ties the Old Testament and New Testament together by showing the Greek counterpart of Hebrew words. For example, in dealing with biblical soteriology, Zemek shows that “the function of *bahar* referring to the election of individuals and/or a particular group of people is perpetuated by this verb's primary semantical counterpart throughout the LXX and on into the New Testament (i.e. *eklegomai*)” (p.145). Finally, Zemek rightly divides Scripture by tying the truths of various chapters together. For example, on page 154 he says that “the doctrine of predestination, for one who accepts the biblical doctrine of depravity, is the only basis of hope of success in preaching the gospel.”



This book also has stringth in the way Zemek tactfully reveals theological errors commonly found in the church today. For example, on page 193 he begins a short discourse on the exegetical and theological errors characteristic of gospel reductionism.

Writing with the Biblical scholar in mind, Zemek has produced a great review of the doctrines of man, sin and salvation. It will be used by serious biblical scholars for years to come because it covers, as Zemek prefaces the book, "subject matter...of preeminent importance."

Christopher Rufener

H. D. (Sandy) Ayer, *The Christian and Missionary Alliance: An Annotated Bibliography of Textual Sources*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2001. xx + 403 pp., \$66.00 cloth.

*The Christian and Missionary Alliance: An Annotated Bibliography of Textual Sources* is exceptionally comprehensive in its vast inclusion of Christian and Missionary Alliance writings. It is one of 45 other titles in the ATLA Bibliographical Series and is a source that is both faithful to its central subject and detailed enough for any scholar or student. In the creation process of the book, H.D. Ayers had an endless amount of writings to choose to include or not to include. Yet for all those that are unsure if this resource is valuable, they will find, upon examination, that his overall selection is impressive.

This annotated bibliography contains over 2,500 items relating to more than two million people. Most entries included were written by authors that had significant influence with the C&MA, and/or were authors closely tied with the Alliance. The time span of the text ranges from A.B. Simpson's first published work in 1880, through 1999. Ayers focused the book on the Alliance's historical ideology of the fourfold gospel and used it as part of the structure that helped him arbitrarily decide which works to incorporate. The fourfold gospel message is Jesus Christ: Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King. The book is comprised of several types of writings which include: primary and secondary source materials in the form of books, periodicals, articles, essays, booklets, pamphlets, tracts, and theses.

The design of the book is simple to understand. The book is divided into two sections. The first section contains annotated bibliographies of books, essays, articles, and theses. The second section contains annotated bibliographies of periodical sources. To ensure that users would find exactly what they are looking for, the book contains both a subject index and a personal name index. This bibliography is a must for any researcher or writer that requires first-rate sources regarding the Alliance.

The comments under each bibliography were sufficient. Ayer's comments were longer for the sources that needed more explanation while other sources only needed a few comments to explain the work. His writing style is clear and helps his readers to know whether or not a source will be useful. *The Christian and Missionary Alliance: An Annotated Bibliography of Textual Sources* is written for anyone who needs to find a source about the Alliance or from an author closely related to the Alliance. Ayer's text

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will most likely have the desired information for both students and experienced scholars in this comprehensive and detailed bibliography.

Christopher M. Meekins

Christoph F. Blumhardt and Johann C. Blumhardt, *Now Is Eternity*. Farmington: The Plough Publishing House, 1999. xi + 68 pp., \$8.00 (paper).

*Now Is Eternity* is a thoughtful collection of words from Johann Christoph Blumhardt and his son, Christoph Friedrich Blumhardt. Johann lived from 1805 to 1880, and Christoph lived from 1842 to 1919. Their words are a heartfelt and simple expression of their love for God and contain power and emotional truths for all believers in Jesus Christ. The writing style is similar to other theological works composed during the relative time periods of these two men. In many ways, the arrangement and construction of the Blumhardts' words contain similarities to Oswald Chamber's book, *My Utmost for His Highest*.

The words and text itself discusses and proclaims the most basic Christian doctrines. Yet the essence of the book is captured in its focus upon eternity. The desire of the editors of the Blumhardts' words was to concentrate the reader's attention upon the subject of eternity and the way in which that subject provides both comfort and wisdom for all people. If the book is read in its entirety, it is obvious to its readers that it is clearly written and theologically accurate in the evangelical Christian sense. Every morsel of wisdom attempts to reflect the nature of God the Father, proclaims the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, and experientially embraces the power and work of the Holy Spirit.

*Now Is Eternity* is written for all people. It would best be understood if read by a believer and follower of Jesus Christ. However, those that do not understand the essence of the Gospel can and should still consider reading the book because the words within it supercede understanding and are profoundly powerful. The book is also helpful for those in ministry who are looking for theological inspiration, or for those who need short paragraphs that encapsulate an idea for a teaching lesson or a sermon. Everyone should consider purchasing this book because it is an inspiration and a delight for those that have read it.

Christopher M. Meekins

G. R. Evans, *A Brief History Of Heresy*. Oxford, England: Blackwell Publishing, 2003, pp.195, \$54.95.

Heresy is a serious concern of the Christian church; most Christians nod heads in agreement. However, it has proved difficult to define and detect heresy in nearly all periods of the church's existence; more Christians exclaim, "Hear, Hear"! The church's attempts at dealing with heretics have frequently been as non-Christian as the errors it

was trying to eliminate; the vote of Christian opinion is now almost unanimous. These statements could well serve as a summary of Professor Evan's book.

She is a Lecturer in History at the University of Cambridge, with recognized expertise in the Middle Ages of European church history. This book is the second in a series of *Brief Histories of Religion* published by Blackwell, with more titles projected for the immediate future.

Her brief history covers all periods of the church's existence from the earliest centuries to the present. Controverted doctrines from the various periods illustrate the topic. She notes issues concerning dualism and the doctrine of the trinity, which recur through time because, in the first case, they are hard to eradicate, or, in the second instance, difficult to define for all times and places.

A major strength of the book is its frequent use of primary sources. Professor Evans knows the treatises which marked the developments in historical theology. Consequently, she poses the question in chapter two whether the Christian faith, in its core beliefs, is consistent over time or does it evolve to an ever richer understanding of its doctrines. While the final answer is left to the reader's deliberation, she at least is certain that any particular definition of doctrine will not satisfy Christians in every period and place.

Her knowledge of people who agitated the church – prophets, critics, fringe groups, and the doctrinally deviant – is considerable. Even those with a fair grasp on church history will find people in her chapters that they did not know previously. She usually cites the responses of the church to these provocateurs, referring to the documents which supply the historical evidence.

In keeping with the English heritage of religious and political toleration, she is decidedly against the activities of politically powerful churches concerning "heretics." Such churches are often more concerned about institutional existence than they are vital faith, and that often meant they condemned people who were "more Christian" than they were. Even in the emotionally - charged issues of heresy, the author believes the church must be as ethically concerned about "means" as it is about "ends."

In spite of its many virtues, the book is not without its faults. There is a noticeable lack of closure on the issue of heresy. Throughout the book the author says that doctrinal truth and ecclesiastical unity are proper concerns of the church, yet she gives little guidance about how the church can determine orthodox faith today, and, if it can determine it, how much can it insist upon it as a criterion for fellowship, given the current emphasis upon ecumenicity, not only among confessing Christians, but also with the calls for inter-religious harmony among the world's religions.

Again, she does not wrestle sufficiently with the question of church and state. Most of her examples of the church's mistreatment of heretics occurred under the fateful influences of Constantinianism. It is possible for a church to discern error and deal with its advocates in a thoroughly Christian manner, without recourse to civil government and its means of punishment. Must the church today tolerate every version of "Christian" doctrine and conduct simply because in centuries past it did not treat heretics properly? The book powerfully makes the points that heresy is not easy to define and even harder to correct. But it does not follow, that nothing counts as heresy or that the church has no

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means to address error. The book is clear about what the church should not do concerning heresy, but it is reticent about what it should do about it.

These criticisms, however, do not invalidate the many merits of the book. It is an excellent survey of heresy throughout the church's history. Those who read for information and insight will be abundantly rewarded. Its reading level should make it accessible to most adult readers. But is the topic one of interest to today's reading public? The book, by default, will likely serve the interests of students, particularly those who are engaged in religious studies.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Erwin Fahlbusch, et. al., eds., *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, vol. 2 (E-I) and vol. 3 (I-O), Trans. and Ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001, pp. 787, and 2003, pp. 884, \$100.00 each.

The *Encyclopedia of Christianity* is the English translation of the third edition of the *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon: Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie*, published in Göttingen, Germany in five volumes between 1986 and 1997. Volume 1 of the English version was published in 1999 and was reviewed in the Ashland Theological Journal in 2000 (vol. xxxii, pp.157-158). With these subsequent volumes arriving in a timely manner, the English-speaking scholarly community can anticipate the completion of the set by 2006.

As noted in the review of volume one, the articles are of excellent academic quality. Through the majority of the articles are written by German scholars, there is a concerted effort to be broadly ecumenical in outlook and contemporary regarding what is happening in the Christian church around the world. Many of the additions to the original articles and the insertion of new articles by the English translation team address these concerns of ecumenicity and contemporaneity. This is quite noticeable in additions of various North American perspectives and in updated bibliographies at the end of the articles.

Since the academic quality of the articles in volume two and three is similar to volume one, it would be of little purpose to repeat accolades mentioned in the earlier review. This review, therefore, focuses on particular issues of interest that permit new things to be said about the entire project. A careful analysis of the contributors in the various volumes yields some interesting results. Of more than 300 articles in volume two, 231 are written by authors who did not contribute to volume one. That means that about 73% of the authors in volume two are new contributors. In volume three, again, nearly 200 writers are utilized that were not use in volumes one and two, so that approximately 65% of the articles are written by new writers.

Thus, the encyclopedia represents a broad scholarship. It also allows for many academic viewpoints. Erwin Fahlbusch, along with his co-editors, Jan Milic Lochman, John Mbite, Jeroslav Pelikan and Lukas Vischer, and eighteen consulting editors, are to be commended for drawing upon such a large and diverse group of scholars. Credit is



due the English version team also, particularly to Edgar W. Smith, Jr. and Craig Noll, and their advisors, for authors solicited to write additions to the original German articles and to add new articles of interest to readers in North America. The publishers note in volume two (p.x) names two more staff assigned to the English project who are also suggesting writers and updating bibliographies, namely, Norman A. Hjelm and Roger S. Boraas. Part of the encyclopedia's appeal is its diverse, international scholarship.

The diverse authorship is not just due to the additional writers solicited for the English edition. Additional German contributors far outnumber authors who are added just for the English translation. The combined impact of both sets of contributors is scholarship in depth and breadth. Since most authors wrote a limited number of articles, they were able to cover their subjects thoroughly. Multiple authors, especially on larger subjects, allowed for confessional and geographical differences to be heard. In sum, the broad ecumenical quality of the encyclopedia will guarantee extensive international appeal.

In working with volume three, I decided to concentrate on the geographical articles, many of which were prepared for the English edition. Two types of articles are involved. First, there are individual country articles, not only for large (Mexico) and influential countries (Japan), but also for small (Luxembourg) and relatively insignificant countries (Maldives and Mauritius) in terms of current world influence. Secondly, there are excellent area surveys regarding Christianity in various parts of the world. Two are prominent in this regard: a series of articles on the Latin American Churches and their theologies, and extensive articles on North America and its theology.

Thirty-nine country articles are contained in volume three. They follow a general pattern: location and general condition of the country - ethnically, economically, and politically; a survey of its history, politically and religiously; and a specific analysis of the current religious situation, with considerable attention to ecumenical relations between Christian churches and between world religions represented in the countries. The length of the articles varies from two columns to several pages, though the size of the articles has more to do with individual contributors than to the size of the country under discussion. While all the articles are informative, and many are particularly insightful, some are less than what one would expect of an encyclopedia of its reputation. In several instances the editors had to supply the country article, leaving one to ponder whether no writer could be located or if someone was derelict in his/her duty.

Since most of the countries in the volume are from the "second" and "third world," they provide an excellent introduction to geography and religion. Many have gained their independence in the last fifty years, and thus are on the cutting edge of contemporary history. Except for a few religious experts, the rapid changes in religious developments occurring in these countries are largely unfathomed by even the reading public. This enlightenment is probably the strongest argument for including these articles in the encyclopedia. One develops an awareness of the interplay of politics and religion, the impact of Pentecostal denominations in 20<sup>th</sup> century missions, the emergence of indigenous and independent churches in countries emerging from colonial domination - especially in Africa, and the widespread conflict between Christianity and Islam from Africa to central and southeast Asia. The impression conveyed is that the global context

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of 21<sup>st</sup> century Christianity will differ from the 20<sup>th</sup> century as much as that century did from the previous one.

The broad area articles (Latin America and North America) are outstanding. They discuss general features that pertain in each area as well as differences manifested in particular geographical regions. History - both political and religious - particularly in Latin America, is summarized under several chronological periods. For those who know something of the complexity of this story, the encyclopedia articles are remarkable for their clarity. They manage to simplify the account without distorting the picture of Christianity in the area. Readers doing their first investigation into Latin American religious history would do well to begin with these articles.

The history of theology on both continents is done very well. While the content is simplified, there is no loss of significance in the theologies that are covered in the articles. Each theology is discussed in its chronological setting, noting its salient points, its chief representatives and its influence upon subsequent thought. Average readers will be able to grasp the major movements that have appeared in American Christianity from the colonial period to the present time.

The general impression that the geographical articles of volume three convey is that the encyclopedia is well served by these inclusions. They add interest without losing scholarly quality. That is all that one could ask of any notable reference work.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Barry L. Callen, *Authentic Spirituality*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001. 268 pp., paper, \$18.99

Dr. Barry Callen, Professor of Christian Studies at Anderson University presents a full framework for the practice of authentic spiritual growth. With strong reliance upon the Holy Spirit in the process, the author moves beyond outward incidentals to inward realities. The work is a clarion call to move beyond both religion and its liberal expression to authentic Christian maturity. For Callen, Christian spirituality is Christ-centered. Spirit driven and leading to the Father.

The author sees as essential to "Authentic Spirituality" the work of the Spirit in leading the Christian into an adventure of developing holiness. This is to be accomplished by reference to the Bible, Christian tradition, the Christian Year, the Apostle's Creed and the six spiritual movements identified by Richard Foster. Chapter one relates how God is the one who reaches out in openness to all people. Each of the following chapters highlight a biblical word that illumines the Christian life, a Christian tradition from church history, elements from the developing Christian Year, a theological teaching from the Apostle's Creed and a nugget from the six spiritual movements. The concluding chapter focuses on practical paths to sanctification.

The supporting data comes from a veritable who's who in evangelical spirituality. The author rambles through the works of over 100 authors for quotations,

examples and illustrations. The bibliography is a great place to get started in reading the literature of spirituality.

The addendum includes a very helpful glossary of terms extending from "Asceticism" to "Sacrament." These items receive extended treatment and not just definition. In addition, there are 17 pages of copious footnotes. They are loaded with interesting details and helpful information. Next comes an interesting chronological list of "Select Spiritual Leaders" from Polycarp to Alister McGrath. The "Select Bibliography" contains a section on reference works, journals, authors writing before 1980 and a list of authors writing since 1980, an "Index of Subjects and Persons" and an "Index of Scripture."

Richard E. Allison

Phil Christensen and Shari MacDonald, *Our God Reigns: The Stories Behind Your Favorite Praise and Worship Songs* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2000). 143 pages, paper, \$9.99.

Did you know that the author of one of North America's favourite praise songs was once the first runner-up in the Miss New Mexico contest? It's true! Karen Lafferty, who penned the words and wrote the music for the well-known song "Seek Ye First", was once a beauty queen. Her story, along with twenty-four others, appears in *Our God Reigns*, co-written by a self-described "worship pastor, journalist, and husband/father" and an author and editor. What Ken Osbeck is to hymn stories, these two are to the stories behind praise songs. *Rev. magazine* (January/February 2001 issue) showed an advertisement from Kregel stating that this book was also available with a companion compact disc (advertised cost: US\$21.99).

As both a pastor and a musician, I enjoyed reading these stories. However, as a Canadian and a Presbyterian, some of them were unfamiliar to me. I would have appreciated having the CD to listen to while I read, but alas, the CD did not come with the review copy! I did know 15 of the 25 songs examined, and found myself humming them as I read about their genesis. Among the best-known songs cited in the book are "As The Deer" (Martin Nystrom); "Give Thanks With A Grateful Heart" (Henry Smith); and "Lord, I Lift Your Name On High" (Rick Founds).

Several common threads appeared in a number of these stories. The most outstanding of them was the connection that so many had with Christ For The Nations Institute in Dallas, Texas – an organization I learned about via the Internet ([www.cfni.org](http://www.cfni.org)). The degree of influence that this organization has had over contemporary praise and worship is pervasive. Other common threads included Youth With A Mission, Christian Copyright Licensing, Incorporated, and a few of the larger contemporary churches in southern California.

The authors interviewed each songwriter, and allowed each one to review the interview material for accuracy before the book went to print. Commonly found in most stories were anecdotes of the circumstances around the writing of the song. (This stands in contrast to most hymn stories, which tell something of the whole life of the writer; this



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can be accounted for by the fact that most contemporary songwriters are still alive.) Many of the circumstances outlined in the stories were tales of pain or poverty, but that strong faith brought them through every trial.

For worship leaders whose congregations use contemporary music regularly, this book will be a handy reference tool for the purposes of introducing the songs. For worship leaders who are largely unfamiliar with the genre, it serves as a modest introduction. The book is written in a very folksy style (the frequent use of the term "gonna" was a bit disturbing). No story is more than four pages long; the book is easily read in a matter of a couple of hours.

Jeffrey F. Loach

Dana E. King, M.D., *Faith, Spirituality and Medicine: Toward the Making of the Healing Practitioner*. New York: The Haworth Pastoral Press, an Imprint of the Haworth Press, Inc., 2000. Pp. xi-126, \$15.95.

The last ten years have exploded with an increased appreciation and respect for the link between spirituality and physical health. With observations based on experience and over 220 references cited in the slim volume, *Faith, Spirituality, and Medicine: Toward the Making of the Healing Practitioner*, Dana E. King, M.D., strikes a heavy blow to the wall that has traditionally separated these two ancient traditions.

Dana E. King is currently Associate Professor of Family Medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina. He vigorously advocates the integration of spirituality in the care of patients, and has been actively involved in both research and development of curriculum for medical students, while addressing the relationship between faith, spirituality and medicine.

Dr. King's book is a mere 126 pages in length, but packs a big wallop of research statistics and case studies, which back up the justification and use of his biopsychosocialspiritual model of health care. He asserts that the current biopsychosocial model stops short of respecting the influence of the patient's spirituality on his/her health, and that the patient must be viewed as a complete symbiotic system to actualize effective treatment and healing. Because religion is an important part of daily life for seventy-five percent of the people in the United States (p. 13), Dr. King urges the clinician towards an obligation to assess and address spiritual issues in the interest of quality patient/client care, and provides practical advice and actual assessment tools to help the clinician determine when and how to take a spiritual history. He not only tackles the ethical hot potatoes of taking a patient's spiritual history, when to refer to chaplains, and how to pray with patients with his customary practical logic, but also backs up his convictions with extensive research statistics. Dr. King also explores the education and training of chaplains, and their role and impact on patient care, and considers spirituality issues in special patient populations. He includes an intriguing chapter on the influence of the health professional's own spirituality, and offers a challenge that all providers, regardless of their own beliefs, be equipped to assess and refer patients to providers who would be



sensitive to the spiritual needs of the patient. His last chapter provides practical suggestions as to how to overcome the barriers to integration of spirituality in a clinical practice.

By far, the greatest strength of this tiny book is the voluminous weight of the research and the practical, organized approach of Dr. King. Each chapter is prefaced with clearly defined objectives, and concludes with both intelligent and thought-provoking discussion questions, and a summary. Sprinkled throughout the short chapters are text boxes which summarize the important points, and case studies which illustrate the principles discussed. Clearly, the author knows his material and respects the readers' time, by presenting his ideas in a lucid, concise format. While not being particularly innovative, the text is an invaluable resource for anyone involved in the health care field who is interested in providing the best health care possible by being actively involved in the spirituality of the patient or client.

Elizabeth Vargo

Alksei Pentovsky, ed. *The Pilgrim's Tale*. New York: Paulist Press, 1999. xii + 230 pp., paper, \$19.95.

*The Pilgrim's Tale* is one of an nearly one hundred volumes in "The Classics of Western Spirituality" series published by the Paulist Press. The series contains the original writings of outstanding teachers from Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Protestant, Jewish and Islamic traditions.

The Tale is the relating of encounters experienced by a pilgrim on a journey toward Jerusalem. The pilgrim is the dedicated Christian who is searching for union with God. The journey is the unfolding spiritual life of the Christian in the quest. Jerusalem, the city above, is the destination which by the way is not reached in this life. The pilgrim abandons his worldly life and becomes a wandering mystic.

The approach is that of hesychasm which literally means quietness. This is a contemplative tradition that dates to the fourth century of the common era. The pilgrim dedicates himself to unceasing, mental, of the heart prayer in order to achieve union with God. The common instrument for accomplishing this is the "Jesus Prayer," (Luke 18.13). Support for accomplishing all of this comes also from the *Philokalia*, collected sayings of Eastern Fathers from the 4th through the 15th centuries. It was first published in Greek in Venice by Nicodemus in 1782.

*The Pilgrim's Tale*, is typical of Russian spirituality of the 18th and 19th centuries. This volume is a very readable translation of the text of the Optimo redaction. A 46 page introduction gives the background and history of the collection and the numerous redactions. The heart of the process is "unceasing prayer," from the admonition of the Apostle Paul, (I Thess. 5.17). This means to pray at all times and in all places The Jesus Prayer. The frequency of prayer through practice becomes an acquired habit that becomes natural according to Saint Hesychios. Frequency will eventually attract the intellect and the heart to a proper disposition.

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All of this reminds one of the "Game of Minutes" proposed by the modern mystic, Frank Laubach. The focus is reminiscent of the apophatic approach to spirituality defined by Holmes in his history of spirituality. This translation is both easy to read and enlightening as the reader follows the pilgrim on his journey to union with God.

Richard E. Allison

N. Graham Standish, *Discovering the Narrow Path: A Guide to Spiritual Balance*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 2002. 216 pp., paper, \$17.95.

In *Discovering the Narrow Path: A Guide to Spiritual Balance* N. Graham Standish offers a refreshing view of Spiritual Formation, both with regard to the need for such spiritual formation, and with regard to finding the proper balance between spirituality, theology, and religion. Mr. Standish comes from a Presbyterian background, and writes from the perspective of a minister, teacher, and Spiritual Director within his denomination. Having noted this, however, one is immediately aware of how little denominationalism comes into play within this work. Mr. Standish goes beyond denominationalism to express an ecumenical truth that finding the balanced or "narrow" path is both the need and the goal of all true spirituality, regardless of one's particular religious affiliation. Rather than rejecting denominationalism, Standish encourages one to grow deep in one's particular denomination, but not to stop there; he encourages us to discover the best of various groups within Christianity as each has much to offer the person seeking truth.

Standish maintains that divisions in theology and religious practice arise as each new group responds to excesses within the current group; each denomination gets its start by reacting to and trying to correct excesses in one area which has led to neglect in other areas. Each denomination begins, then, by trying to find balance, only to later lose the very balance it seeks.

The author also contends that perfect balance is never achievable due to the imperfections of human nature. While Jesus is the only person to have achieved the truly balanced life, this does not mean one should not strive to come as close as one can to finding balance. This is accomplished by finding a balance between the extremes of religious activity, theology, and the contemplative, spiritually formed life. Jesus modeled such a life, walking the narrow path between service, theology, and worship.

One of the greatest contributions of this book is the author's discussion of the need for all believers to re-connect with the heart of a Trinitarian experience of God, something the author believes we have buried under orthodox teaching regarding the Trinity. Standish maintains that the early church did not so much teach (or even understand) the *theology* of the Trinity, as it sought rather to *experience* the Trinitarian relationship of God as it relates to the believer. The roles of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the life of the believer differ, and yet each one contributes a vital element to the experience of God. The author rightly notes that most church members are afraid of experiencing the presence and power of the Holy Spirit because that is something one

cannot control. But to quench the Spirit by ignoring Him is to miss the vital and necessary life-giving ability of the Spirit to direct and empower the Church.

This is an excellent book for leader and lay person alike, but it is perhaps most beneficial to those who have allowed their teaching and their training to sterilize their relationship with the living God, the God who seeks not servants, but children

Robert Gulley, Cincinnati Bible , College and Seminary

Jonathan Goldstein, *Peoples of an Almighty God: Competing Religions in the Ancient World*. Anchor Bible Reference Library; New York: Doubleday, 2002. 575 pp., cloth, \$36.95.

This is a unique book, and one which I believe promises to have a distinctive voice in the discipline. The author is interested primarily in comparative religions, but with a narrow focus. He is not comparing religions from vastly different cultures and times, but more particularly the religious expressions in texts from the Israelites, Babylonians, and Persians from the mid- to late-first millennium BCE. What binds these people groups together as similar is not monotheism (which the book's title may imply for some), but rather their conviction that each believed its protector god was a deity "stronger than all other powers combined" and was the creator of the world (pp. 3-4). Polytheism among other peoples of the ancient world reflected the multifarious phenomena of nature and history in such a way as to make it impossible to worship one deity as "almighty." Even those cultures that accepted a single deity as "king" of the gods (such as Sumer, Greece, and Rome), did not perceive the royal king as having greater power than all other forces combined (p. 4). So the Israelites and Babylonians, in particular, believed Yhwh and Marduk respectively were stronger than all other heavenly powers combined, which occasionally led to ill-advised decisions, especially in regard to warfare.

Goldstein believes the intellectual structures necessary to sustain such convictions in antiquity have been preserved among the literary products of the Israelites in the Bible, which may serve as a model for evaluating which other ancient groups were, in fact, "peoples of an almighty god." These types of literature are (1) authoritative utterances on the cosmic might of the deity, (2) stories of divine intervention in time of adversity or of other challenge to the god's power, (3) connected histories, (4) prophetic texts, (5) prayers complaining of the hostility or inactivity of the god, and (6) meditations on the apparent injustice of the deity. After a brief survey of the Israelite version of the materials, Goldstein turns to the Babylonian exemplars of these literary types and concludes they too were a people of an almighty God (chapter 2). A similar survey of the literature of the Egyptians and the Zoroastrian Iranians leads to the conclusion they were peoples of a nearly almighty god (chapter 3). The rest of the volume is comprised of rigorous and detailed analyses of these literary types from all the people groups in view here (chapters 4-15). Goldstein admits the first three chapters present his "speculative theories," while the rest of the volume explores the texts upon which they are based (p. xi).

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Some may object that the author's definition of an almighty God as a deity "stronger than all other powers combined" is too narrow, or is not one recognized by peoples of antiquity, or perhaps some will even argue, nonsensical as a reasonable, working definition. In fact, I would agree that the definition established by Goldstein is an intellectual artifice – a mirage, so-to-speak – and not a working definition used by people of antiquity. But having said that does not discount the tremendous value of Goldstein's accomplishment in this volume. The use of such an artifice as a means of analyzing the literature and religion of the Israelites and their neighbors is a heuristic tool in the gifted hands of the author. The book will certainly be read widely and usefully for years to come.

Bill T. Arnold, Asbury Theological Seminary

J. P. Moreland & John Mark Reynolds (eds.), *Three Views on Creation and Evolution*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. 296 pp, paper, \$17.99.

The 'three views' of the title of this book are 'young earth creationism', 'old earth creationism' and 'theistic evolution'. However, those who present these views in the book are not completely happy with these common 'labels'. Paul Nelson and John Mark Reynolds prefer to call their view 'recent creationism' rather than 'young earth creationism' because, they say, the earth is the age it is and there is no reference point against which to measure it as 'old' or 'young'. Robert Newman prefers 'progressive creationism' to 'old earth creationism' since he wants to put the emphasis on God's creative activity occurring in a progression of steps over a long period of time. Howard Van Till calls his view 'fully gifted creation' because he 'recognizes the entire universe as a creation that has, by God's unbounded generosity and unfathomable creativity, been given all of the capabilities for self-organization and transformation necessary to make possible something as humanly incomprehensible as unbroken evolutionary development' (p. 173).

The book opens with an Introduction in which the editors seek to set out the central issues in the creation-evolution debate and to give a historical overview of it. This is demanding reading in places because of its conciseness. It is followed by the three chapters that are the core of the book. Each begins with a presentation of one of the views. The proponents are asked to answer five questions: What is their overall position? Why does the controversy matter? How does their understanding of science inform their approach? How does their understanding of the Scriptures influence their approach? What role does extra-biblical evidence and arguments play in confirming or contesting their theological beliefs? This presentation of the view is followed by four fairly brief 'Responses' by Walter L. Bradley, John Jefferson Davis, J. P. Moreland and Vern S. Poythress. The proponent(s) of the view are then allowed a final 'Conclusion' to pick up some of the issues raised in the responses. Because there is considerable overlap between the two 'creationism' views Van Till is allowed double the space of the others to expound



his view. The book ends with two short 'Reflections', by Richard H. Bube and Philip E. Johnson.

The format works well. The different views are presented clearly. The responses do highlight some of the weaknesses and omissions in the presentations. On the whole there is a welcome absence of the polemical tone that too often mars debate on this issue. One weakness is that none of the respondents favours theistic evolution. As a result Van Till gets a stronger critique from them which might, unfairly, give the impression that his case is weaker than the others, whose presentations do not face quite the probing they might otherwise get. In fact one or two of the points made in response to Van Till seem to result from the respondent misconstruing what he says because of lack of sympathy with his position. In the reflections Bube argues for careful definition of terms in the debate and presents a position close to Van Till's. Johnson argues for the 'intelligent design' position. Both he and the advocates of the 'creationism' positions put a lot of weight on the work of Michael Behe. Because of when they wrote their pieces they may have been unaware of the critical responses there have been to his book *Darwin's Black Box*, to which they refer. Some of Behe's examples of 'irreducibly complex systems' have emerged from this looking less convincing than Johnson claims they are.

This book is a good 'primer' on the creation-evolution debate and could be a useful basis for discussion of the issue in church groups or in college classes on science and religion.

Ernest C. Lucas, a former research biochemist, is Vice-Principle and Tutor in Biblical Studies at Bristol Baptist College, England

James Montgomery Boice, *Renewing Your Mind in a Mindless World: Learning to Think and Act Biblically*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993. 136 pp. Pb \$9.99.

Are you a person who wishes to think and act differently from the culture that seeks to enslave you to its ideals and to strip you of your true humanity? If so, "Renewing Your Mind in a Mindless World" is a great springboard into non-conformity. Its author, the late James Montgomery Boice, was the pastor of the renowned Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and author of thirty books on the Bible and related subjects. Therefore, he brings both scholarly and pastoral insight to the text.

Boice quickly engages the reader by prefacing that "we live in mindless times, days in which millions of people are drifting through life, manipulated by the mass media. Few give thought for their eternal souls, and most, even Christians, are unaware of any way of thinking or living other than that of the secular culture that surrounds them" (p.9). In light of this understanding, Boice's aim is to accurately exegete Romans 12:1-2 and to urgently call every Christian to its mandates of transformation through the renewal of the mind. Each of its ten chapters is devoted to a small portion of the passage, thus proving its value to the faithful Bible student and careful exegete.

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As a young pulpiteer, I appreciate how Boice's work reads like a sermon. Mirroring a good message, its key strengths include the attentive definition of terms, engaging illustrations, a thoughtful critique of culture and practical application. For example, in chapter four, which is devoted to the textual phrase, "in view of God's mercy," he defines mercy in terms of its relation to the biblical terms of grace and goodness. In succession, he concludes the chapter by illustrating the divine gift of mercy in the lives of Adam, Paul and the Englishman, John Newton. Furthermore, in chapter three he warns us that "if you fill your head with trashy 'pop' novels, you will begin to live like the trashy characters you read about" (p.40). As a practical response, he goes on to suggest reading one good Christian book for every secular book read.

Writing with the lay-person in mind, but also posing practical challenges for the most staunch theologian, Boice has successfully suggested insightful changes in thinking and practice that are necessary for being a living sacrifice to God. Truly, the Christian faith is both doctrinal and practical. Therefore, come, read and listen as Boice defies the idea that actions can be divorced from the contemplation of the mind.

Christopher Rufener

Stanley Hauerwas, *A Better Hope: Resources for a Church Confronting Capitalism, Democracy, and Postmodernism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2000. 288 pp., \$19.99.

Always looking for a good battle, Stanley Hauerwas has staked his ground in the battle heating up around the role of the Christian Church in the lifeblood of American idealism. Hauerwas, never shy with his critiques, offers up a sharply drawn account of the churches abuse of secular idealism in shaping its own inner workings. Though critical in nature, *A Better Hope* offers valuable insights from a theologian who has led the ethical revolution on how the church may impact, while itself not be impacted by secular society.

As identified in the subtitle of the book, *A Better Hope* seeks to impact three areas of contemporary life: Capitalism, Democracy, and Postmodernity. For those schooled in the theology of Hauerwas, *A Better Hope* provides little new information or ways of framing the arguments of today, though it will take the reader back with its far less polemical tone than Hauerwas has been noted for. While still firmly rooted in conviction and passion, Hauerwas has come out in a more ecumenical tone, maybe as a result of the inevitable calming that age often brings about, as he suggests in the book's introduction.

For those unfamiliar with the Hauerwasian school of theology, *A Better Hope* provides a good text to challenge the accepted ecclesial boundaries established regarding societal interaction. Hauerwas continues to advance several major causes in this book. First, he tackles the role of the church in our democratic, postmodern time, calling for the church to stop acting like a business and act more like the church seen in Scripture. Secondly, Hauerwas proposes the idea that ethics and theology are not different

disciplines but instead should be seen as hand in hand, tightly interwoven in the Christian's daily life. Finally, Hauerwas moves to where his true passion is – the church, calling for the church to distance from society's standards, replacing them with Scripture's standards, while at the same time not isolating themselves from influencing society.

The reader will find a remarkable endnote section following the text of the book. Of the 288 pages, nearly 75 are endnotes. It is clear Hauerwas has been influenced by a great many minds throughout history, and the reader will benefit from sharing in this book.

While *A Better Hope* is not Hauerwas at his classic polemic best, those familiar or newly acquainted with his previous works will appreciate the many questions and proposals Hauerwas offers to the church in search of itself. For those who desire a refreshing new approach to the church's interaction with society, Hauerwas will certainly not disappoint.

Bradley L. Selan

Bill Hybels, *Making Life Work: Putting God's Wisdom Into Action*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998. 214 pp., \$9.60.

We all know that we could use a bit more wisdom when it comes to making decisions about ordinary life. Yet in the midst of this fast paced world and our ever-increasingly busy lives, we just do not have time to stop long enough to acquire it. Well, do not fret. Bill Hybels, well-known and widely acclaimed author, counselor, and Pastor of Willow Creek Church, has come to the rescue.

This short, easy to read 200 page book takes the reader on an in-depth study of the book of true wisdom, Proverbs. The book defines wisdom as what is true and right. It applies the truths of the Proverbs to individuals' lives by addressing such topics as pursuing wisdom, taking initiative, doing good, developing discipline, speaking the truth, choosing friends wisely, marrying well, forging strong families, cultivating compassion, managing anger, and trusting God for everything. While the style of each chapter is clear and easy to read, they nonetheless deal with profound issues. This succinct and powerful style of writing which is characteristic of Hybels will be familiar and enjoyable to those who have read him before, and it will be refreshing to those who have not. Study questions are included at the end of the book so that readers in group settings can reflect upon the content of the book and make conclusions that will bring about lasting changes in life.

Chapter 13, concerning the topic of anger, demonstrates the value of this book to a reader. In this chapter, Hybels identifies the two ways in which individuals deal with anger. One is the brash person who releases his anger upon those around him without giving thought to his actions. The second type of person is the "bottler," who holds the anger deep within himself. This person's anger, while more subtle in nature, affects those around him greatly. Hybels states that the common root of both responses to anger is the unwillingness to deal with one's anger. He asserts that anger is a warning light that something deeper is wrong, and if one does not face his anger, identify its root, and learn

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from the anger, it will continue to poison relationships. Each person who reads this book will honestly be able to identify with one of the three types of individuals that Hybels lists, a "spewer," "bottler," or one who learns from anger. No matter which one a person is, he can either review material already known or learn new material that will help him deal with anger and strengthen relationships. The same can be said concerning each chapter's subject within the book as a whole. One will be able to identify Hybels' personal everyday stories and learn lasting, helpful lessons from them.

While the book is not academic in the normative sense, it is thoughtful and powerful. Its contents were originally included in a sermon series given at Willow Creek church that greatly affected and changed the lives of those in the congregation. The publisher has put them into the form of this book so that the truths expressed in these sermons on Proverbs can affect the lives of a much larger audience in the same way. It is a worthy and useful tool that will bring wisdom to many lives. It will bring clarity of purpose and action for Christian living. For this reason, it should be included in each person's personal library as well as the libraries of Christian institutions across the country.

Timothy M. Monteith

Nancey Murphy, Brad J. Kallenberg, and Mark Thiessen Nation, ed., *Virtues and Practices in the Christian Tradition: Christian Ethics after MacIntyre*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997. 385 pp., paper, \$25.00.

*Virtues and Practices in the Christian Tradition: Christian Ethics after MacIntyre* is a collection of essays by Christian ethicists, theologians and philosophers writing in the aftermath of Alasdair MacIntyre's pivotal work, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, University of Notre Dame Press, 1984). The editors of *Virtues and Practices in the Christian Tradition* have as their goal "to bring together the work of Alasdair MacIntyre in philosophical ethics with the writings of a variety of Christian ethicists in such a way that the latter *exemplify* the patterns of moral description and moral reasoning defended by MacIntyre, while allowing MacIntyre's philosophical concepts to shed light on the shape and justification of the theological positions" (p. 85). The first three chapters of the book provide a brief introduction to MacIntyre's philosophical ethics and the attraction to Christian ethics. While it would behoove the reader to be familiar with MacIntyre's *After Virtue*, the subsequent essays by various scholars, such as Stanley Hauerwas, Richard Hays, and Rodney Clapp to name a few, are helpful for introducing the ways in which virtue theory, ala MacIntyre, and concepts of narratives, traditions, virtues, and practices, are applied to moral formation, Scripture reading and hermeneutics, and practices in the church, as well as issues such as family, sexuality, abortion, pacifism, racism, feminism, business, medicine, and the economy.

While using MacIntyre's proposals for the cultivation of virtue in a storied context, the authors raise provocative insights on the ways in which the church should become the storied context for the development of virtue and practices given the demise



of universalism in ethical theory characteristic of the shift from a modern to a postmodern ethos. As Kallenberg notes at the end of the volume, the aim of the editors was not to introduce a new ethical theory but to illustrate the ways in which “moral reasoning itself is very much a communal practice” so that we, the readers, may experience a change in the way we see things (p. 364). By accomplishing this aim, this volume of essays is refreshing and helpful for understanding the relationship between moral reasoning as a community practice, and dare I say, obligation of the church. Each essay shatters the divide between the notion of a public and private morality, yet also confronts the simplistic idea that public morality is simply the extension of one’s personal sense of morality. Since moral reasoning and discernment require a storied context, morality, by its very nature, must be public and social. Therefore, the challenge for Christian ethics is, “which story and context inform our understanding of virtue and morality and what does this morality ‘look like?’” against the backdrop of a culture enamored with the autonomous individual, consumerism, materialism, and militarism. The editors and essayists of *Virtues and Practices in the Christian Tradition* provide compelling answers to this question by illustrating the ways in which the church provides, or ought to provide, the storied context where virtues are formed and practices followed that emerge from and continue to extend the “tradition, practices, and narratives” of the Christian story (p. 365). This book is not only a helpful introduction to Alasdair MacIntyre, but extends his work by constructive and critical appropriations by Christian ethicists, theologians and philosophers.

Wyndy Corbin

Glen H. Stassen and David P. Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002. 538 pp., cloth, \$30.00.

Recent scholarly conversations in Christian ethics have posed the question, “what is it that makes Christian ethics *Christian*?” Glen Stassen and David Gushee, in their joint work in *Kingdom Ethics*, provide a much needed focus to this question. They propose that Christian ethics, in order to be *Christian*, must have as its primary source Jesus Christ, who inaugurated a Kingdom that requires of its members a particular way of life. Christian ethics is a natural outcome of Christian discipleship as part of our faithful response to Jesus Christ (p.21). Stassen and Gushee use the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) to flesh out what Christian ethics must look like, since it is through the Sermon on the Mount that Jesus provided the concrete and visible practices that entail Christian discipleship, and hence, Christian ethics.

Throughout the first two sections of the book, Stassen and Gushee interact with the various dimensions of ethical thought, such as norms, virtues, intentions, actions, ends, and obligations. While helpful frameworks for any discussion on ethics, Stassen and Gushee’s aim is to present a distinctive Christian ethic that addresses these issues in a distinctively Christian way. It is in the Sermon on the Mount they find the essence and the pattern of Christian ethics.

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Stassen and Gushee see in the Sermon on the Mount not only a vision, or *telos*, of the Christian life, but virtues and norms characteristic of a Kingdom way of life. They are: compassion for the poor; mourning and sorrow for wrong-doing; peacemaking; restorative justice; mercy; integrity and wholeness between intentions and actions; loving treatment of our enemies; and willingness to suffer for doing right (chapter 2). The Sermon on the Mount also provides a model for "transforming initiatives" or actions that correct wrongs by presenting an alternative practice that breaks the vicious cycle of wrong-doing (pp. 132-137). It is from the Sermon on the Mount, and the biblical narratives, that Christians understand the good, the ends, the norms, the virtues, and the transforming actions befitting those who profess to follow Jesus.

In sections three, four and five, Stassen and Gushee take on the formidable task of applying their proposal for Kingdom Ethics to a variety of contemporary issues, such as war, just peacemaking, capital punishment, abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering, marriage and divorce, sexuality, gender roles, justice and love, truth-telling, racism, economics and the environment. In each rich chapter, they apply the Kingdom ethics model of transforming initiatives by identifying the elements and layers of wrong-doing, the vicious cycle, and then proposing transformative actions. One of the greatest strengths of most of these chapters is the depth with which they analyze contemporary ethical issues. Their analysis of wrong-doing extends beyond the limits of personal morality, by looking at each issue through a variety of lenses, deeply attuned to the influential forces of social context on issues of social ethics and morality. Their proposals for transforming initiatives, therefore, encompass proposals for both personal and social change. It is unfortunate that the chapter on gender roles (chapter 15) did not provide the breadth, length, depth, and bold proposals for transforming initiatives that the other chapters provided. Both Stassen and Gushee are deeply committed to gender equity and the righteous treatment of women called to Christian ministry. This chapter, however, tended to minimize the issue by not challenging the gender ideologies, hermeneutic, practices and contexts that have constrained women, thereby producing a weak suggestion of "convergence" in mutual servanthood (pp. 322-324), something which both equalitarians and hierarchalists would affirm with very different understandings of authority, women's roles, and resulting practices.

*Kingdom Ethics* is a rich introduction to Christian ethics. Anyone who reads this book will appreciate the complexity and dynamism of Christian ethics. At the same time, a reader will be enriched as a disciple of Christ as she or he engages with this material, informed by a desire to follow Jesus in our contemporary context.

Wyndy Corbin

Michael M. Uhlmann, ed., *Last Rights? Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia Debated*. Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center/ Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1998. 677 pp., paper, \$35.00

This book is a compendium of significant articles and legal cases dealing with suicide, assisted suicide, and euthanasia. It was compiled after the U.S. Supreme Court rulings in 1997 and contains some of the most significant writings on this topic. The book is edited by Michael Uhlmann of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. It is unfortunate that by the time this review appears, the book is out of print.

Uhlmann, with a law degree and a doctorate in political philosophy, introduces the book with a prediction that "assisted suicide and euthanasia could well become the dominant social and moral issue in the United States" (p. 1) during the first decade of the new millennium. Other bioethical issues, such as stem cell research and cloning, have supplanted assisted suicide in the public consciousness. Yet the underlying issues and arguments presented in debates over assisted suicide get at the core values that influence people on a broad range of social issues. For that reason, even though assisted suicide does not get the public exposure it did at the time this book was published, this volume remains invaluable.

Collected in one volume we have some of the most the central figures in academic and public policy debates on bioethical issues. The book is divided into four parts. The first contains an overview of western thought on suicide, and is the only original article in the book. Uhlmann concisely summarizes the views of major Western philosophers on suicide, beginning with Plato and Aristotle, covering Augustine and Aquinas, and concluding with Hume and Kant. Although necessarily brief on each, this chapter provides a very useful summary of the arguments that have historically been made in defense of and opposition to suicide.

Part II, like each of the following parts, begins with an introduction from Uhlmann which very briefly summarizes the articles in that section. This allows unfamiliar readers to pick and choose the articles most relevant to their study. Part 2 contains contemporary authors presenting moral and theological perspectives on this issue. Presentation of theological perspectives alongside secular and philosophical ones makes a welcome change from other volumes that sometimes ignore theological views. Excellent articles by those who advocate the right to assisted suicide are here, including Margaret Pabst Battin and Peter Singer, as well as those opposed, such as Leon Kass and Gilbert Meilander.

A significant inclusion is part of A. Alvarez's article on the history of suicide. Unfortunately, nothing is mentioned of his blatant historical errors which have deeply impacted academic and legal discussions on this topic. Alvarez's claim is that many in the early church lusted after death and sought to be killed. So, what many view as the persecution of the early church was, in reality, "a perversion of their own seeking" (p. 69). Overwhelmed by "the suicide mania of the martyrs" (p. 71), Alvarez claims that the church had to do something to stop this drain on its members. Thus, the task fell on Augustine who came up with a strong position against suicide.

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Alvarez and those who follow his position argue that Christianity's traditional opposition to suicide was a political decision, not a biblical one. Therefore, modern society is entitled to reverse that position. In spite of the logic of this argument, and its popularity, it is neither historically nor biblically accurate (Dónal P. O'Mathúna and Darrel W. Amundsen, "Historical and Biblical References in Physician-Assisted Suicide Court Opinions," *Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics & Public Policy* 12.2 [1998], 473-96). Some qualification of such a problematic piece would have been welcome in this volume. However, the remaining articles give the interested reader some of the best moral arguments on both sides of this issue.

The contemporary assisted suicide debate occurs in a medical context, and this is the focus of Part III. This section includes pieces from some of the most visible proponents of assisted suicide, such as Jack Kevorkian and Derek Humphry, although neither was particularly well argued. More significant was the article by Timothy Quill, a physician who has become very public with his case for a very limited set of conditions in which a physician who has known a patient for a long time should be permitted to help with his or her death.

Herbert Hendin addresses the empirical data available from the Netherlands on their experience with assisted suicide and active euthanasia. This data reveals what most opponents of assisted suicide fear: once the gates are opened to assisted suicide, it becomes easier and easier to justify its use in situations for which the original legislation never intended. Thus, for example, Hendin points out that a Dutch report revealed that within one year, over one thousand competent patients were put to death by their physicians without the patients' requests (p. 375). Today, much more evidence is available to demonstrate how difficult it is to control the desire to help patients die once any physician killing is permitted.

The final part of the book addresses the legal perspectives, concluding with sections from the 1997 U.S. Supreme Court decisions and the cases which led to those decisions. These cases are now accessible to the interested reader in one place and are accompanied by helpful commentary. Also included are model laws which proponents seek to have approved, and a general critique by Daniel Callahan and Margot White of plans which seek to allow assisted suicide in a carefully regulated form.

This book is a necessary addition to anyone who is interested in physician assisted suicide, either from an academic perspective or from a pastoral perspective. Although the debate has shifted out of the public limelight, the issue comes close to people's minds and hearts every time someone suffers deeply when seriously ill or dying. The issue raises fundamental issues of personal autonomy, control, death and God's sovereignty. Although some of these topics were not addressed directly in this book, it goes a long way to providing a complete compendium for addressing this difficult issue.

Dónal P. O'Mathúna



Allen Verhey, *Remembering Jesus: Christian Community, Scripture, and the Moral Life*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002. 526 pp., cloth, \$35.00.

Allen Verhey's book, *Remembering Jesus*, is a rich work that will expand the reader's appreciation of the church as the place where Jesus is remembered, not just in doctrinal confessions, but in active remembrance through the "performance of Scripture" in our lives and practices. In order for the church to be a place which remembers Jesus through the performance of Scripture, we must become a community of moral discourse by asking "what shall we do?", a community of moral deliberation by asking "why shall we do this and not that?", and a community of moral discernment by wrestling with "how shall we do this?" in a complex world (chapter 1). Central to these tasks is the role and use of Scripture. Chapter three is an important chapter for understanding how Scripture functions as a primary source in Christian ethics, given the difficulties of its "silence" on the many contemporary issues we face, its "strangeness" to those of us in a context informed by the values of modernity, its "diversity" in providing moral instruction, and its hermeneutical and exegetical "difficulty" when applied to a variety of issues (pp. 50-52). Verhey concludes this helpful chapter with antidotes to the problems of using Scripture in ethical deliberation. These are reading Scripture with humility, in community, as Canon, with exegetical care, prayerfully, and with the paired virtues of holiness (setting apart Scripture) and sanctification, fidelity and creativity, and discipline and discernment (pp. 55-71).

The remaining chapters in Verhey's book (chapters 4-20) provide remembrances of Jesus' confrontation with sickness, sexuality, economics and politics, the ways in which the early church performed Scripture, and how we continue to perform Scripture when confronting these issues. Verhey's chapters in part two, "Remembering Jesus in the Strange World of Sickness," are some of the most immediately helpful chapters of the book, not surprising given Verhey's own work in medical ethics. These chapters are a must read for clergy, chaplains, and pastors involved with helping people face death in light of the failed promises of science to cure all diseases. For Verhey, remembering Jesus means practicing "watchful medicine," which combines courage and patience, joy and lament, with care for the suffering, reverence, humility and gratitude (pp. 145-154). A community which remembers Jesus in the face of a person's sickness will not abandon her to the tyranny of technology and alienation from self, others, and God. In sickness and death, remembering Jesus points to "a better destiny" and demonstrates that "death is not the last word, and that God's good future makes its power felt not where the dying cling desperately to life, nor where the dying are deliberately killed, but where dying is faced with courage and accompanied by care. 'I believe in....the resurrection of the dead, and the life everlasting'" (p. 154).

The section on sexuality in Verhey's book, part 3, addresses the ethical dimensions of patriarchy, marriage, women, family, divorce, and sexual expression. Verhey provides helpful insights on the ways in which patriarchy is assumed in biblical texts and the contributions by feminist scholars in exposing the appropriation of patriarchy in hermeneutics and oppressive practices in the church (p. 185-186). He, also, exposes patriarchal assumptions by presenting the alternative ethic when a

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community of faith truly remembers Jesus through liberating practices of performing Scripture. Most evangelicals will not embrace where Verhey goes in the application of his insights to the issue of homosexuality (pp. 232-240). In attending to the passages which address homosexual behavior, and to the absence of any references in Jesus' teaching, Verhey affirms "the story of our creation as male and female still suggest... that the Christian vision of good sex is the 'one flesh' union of a man and woman that gestures and nurtures the covenant made in vows, carried out in fidelity, and hospitable to children" (p. 238). However, we must realize that we are on the fall side of creation and not yet in God's good future. With this realization, Verhey proposes that we don't have to be indifferent to the "Scripture's story-formed preference for heterosexual intercourse in order to say that intercourse (whether heterosexual or homosexual) within the context of a relationship of commitment and continuity is better than promiscuity and infidelity" (p. 239). It strikes me as odd that much of Verhey's ethic in medicine, sexuality, economics and politics is formulated based on God's preferred future of what ought to be. Why he accepts the conditions of the fall as the normative framework for sexuality is a mystery.

The final two sections, on economics ("Remembering Jesus in the World of Adam Smith") and politics ("Remembering Jesus in the Strange World of Politics"), lend provocative insights on these crucial social issues. Even though Verhey's redefinition and defense of theocracy, which he carefully distinguishes from theonomy, hierocracy and bibliocracy, becomes tedious after five chapters, there is much to gain by a thorough reading of these chapters, as well as the others. *Remembering Jesus* is a splendid resource for considering the relationship between crucial aspects and sources for Christian ethics: Jesus, the Scriptures and the Church.

Wyndy Corbin

Jonathan Edwards, *Resolutions and Advice to Young Converts*. Edited by Stephen J. Nichols. Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2001. 40 pp. paper, \$2.99.

Church workers and teachers are always looking for intelligent readable materials that can be discussed by their students. As a young man of nineteen and twenty, Jonathan Edwards, one of America's greatest Christian thinkers, wrote up seventy resolutions intended to direct him through his ministerial training and to lead him to be the Christian person he desired to become. These resolutions present a thought out design for life. Most are very general guidelines such as number five, "Resolved, never to lose one moment of time; but improve it the most profitable way I possibly can" or number fifty-six, "Resolved, never to give over, nor in the least slacken my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be." He occasionally gets quite specific such as when he says in number fourteen, "Resolved, never to do anything out of revenge." It is amazing that one so young could have such a clear understanding about what is truly important in life. Edwards was devout in his faith, clear in his thinking, and practical in

his approach to life. These resolutions, published in a new format and accompanied by a ten page letter from a more mature Edwards to a new convert providing her with directions for her future Christian growth, provide great challenging material for discussion in either a classroom or youth group format, or for one's private devotions.

Mark Hamilton, Ashland University

Wayne Grudem and Dennis Rainey, *Pastoral Leadership for Manhood and Womanhood*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2002. 289pp, \$15.99.

Never judge a book by the cover, or by its editors. Wayne Grudem and Dennis Rainey tend to attract conservative readers, but their most recent collaboration could benefit a broader readership. *Pastoral Leadership for Manhood and Womanhood* is one of four books published directly from the conference, "Building Strong Families in your Church," held in Dallas, Texas, in March of 2000. Fourteen speakers fill fifteen chapters on a variety of topics from the conference. Seven of the chapters deal directly with marriage while the other seven cover such topics as single adult ministry, ministering to homosexuals and their families and domestic violence. Chapter Fifteen closes the book with a general encouragement for pastors and others in leadership.

The contributors include several notable men like Dennis Rainey, Bob Davies, H. B. London, R. Kent Hughes and Dick Purnell. While the marriage chapters were important to the goal of the book, the other chapters offered extremely useful advice to other specific ministries in the local church and thus improve family life. H. B. London's contribution, "Cultivating a Man Friendly Church," is highly relevant and helpful. His pastoral experience spans over twenty years of getting men not only involved, but also disciplined in the church. His information and wisdom is invaluable for every church starting or maintaining men's ministry. London gives a personal example of how playing softball with some of the guys from his church and going out for coke afterwards was a huge deal to those men. He emphasizes the personal relationship with these men was much more important than dragging them to a Promise Keeper event. As he put it, "I discovered at McDonald's with dusty, scarred knees, that the best economy for building a church is to build around 2 Timothy 2:2, to invest yourself in teachable, likable, trainable, pliable, available men (p.86)."

Dick Purnell contributes two chapters on reaching and ministering to single adults. The practical application for pastors is enormous. He suggests several helpful points to help build single adult ministries in any church, no matter what the established dynamics are. Purnell outlines a top ten list of "Why single adults are turned off by the Church (p.101)" and fifteen hints to not turn them away. His second contribution to the book is "Helping Single Adults Handle Moral Failures (p.247)." Again, Purnell delineates the ways singles are affected by sinful choices and the steps the pastor can take to minister effectively to them, so they can become healthy and fruitful disciples to the local church.

Bob Davies addresses the sensitive subject of homosexuality. Drawing from his experience from working with Exodus International, Davies imparts essential insight



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into understanding the sin of homosexuality and dealing with family members. He provides indispensable insight about his personal struggles and shares a number of stories from other people's lives.

Half the book is on marriage and, as mentioned above, that stems from the conference theme of building strong families. One of the most helpful tools the book provides on marriage comes from Ken Sande's chapter on "Church Discipline: God's Tool to Preserve and Heal Marriages (p.161)." He includes a diagram from Peacemaker Ministries named appropriately "the slippery slope of conflict (p.168)." The diagram categorizes the common responses of people into three parts: escape responses, peacemaking responses, and attack responses. He encourages pastors to teach this diagram to couples, so they can learn peacemaking responses like discussion and negotiation. The other chapters on marriage were "good reads" and offered traditional advice to couples, like better communication, be romantic, etc.

A recognizable oversight with the book concerns the marriage chapters. Several marital concepts overlap and seem redundant. For instance, Dennis Rainey writes about the "foxes" that snack on the fruit of a marriage. In the subsequent chapter, Danny Akin is warning about the "little foxes that spoil the vineyards (p.52)." Rainey refers to the "third fox: a mistress, (p.44)" where Akin alerts about his fifth fox called, "the fox of outside interference (p.56)." Another weakness within the marriage chapters would be the absence of the "other" side presented. Obvious to many associated with Wayne Grudem, the material falls on the conservative side of women's roles, but it would have been beneficial for one of them to objectively present the pro-woman leadership argument, then provide their reasons why they disagree. As the book stands now, readers are only given the choice to agree with them or join the liberal camp, which is too bad, because the book offers a wealth of insight for ministries to any church despite what one believes about woman's roles.

The book is a great resource for conservative male pastors to build healthy ministries. The chapters dealing with singles, men and homosexual ministries were especially outstanding and applicable to any church. The editors target a specific audience and to that end, they achieve their goal. If those in the less conservative circles pick up *Pastoral Leadership for Manhood and Womanhood*, they would be pleasantly surprised with the helpful tools and insights the book provides for their own churches.

Tally Whitehead

Peter White, *The Effective Pastor*. Geanies House, Fearn: Christian Focus Publications, 1998. 260 pages \$18.05.

In Mt. 5:13 – 14, Christians are commanded to share God's love and be witnesses of his goodness. They are to be the salt and light of the world. However, something is drastically wrong. During the 80's and 90's, more than 200 people were leaving the church in Scotland each week, the size of an average congregation. People have failed to nurture a whole generation's walk with Christ, as seen in the fact that half



of the youth, ages 10 – 19, left the church. In light of these facts and other frightening statistics, Peter White wrote *The Effective Pastor*. In its pages, he includes wisdom that has been gained through thirty four years of experience and study in ministry as a pastor and principal of Glasgow Bible College. White believes the crisis is in part due to the failure of Christian leadership that fails to rely on the Holy Spirit. Some of the subjects that he includes in his book are: (1) calls to ministry, (2) guidelines for preaching, and (3) how to minister to individuals through listening and caring.

Often those in Christian ministry feel unworthy to do ministry. They should be mindful of the fact that people were made to glorify God and that God has put them in the positions where he wants them to be. White claims the ultimate breakdown of Christian workers is the inability to give and receive love. The solution is for pastors to surrender their ministries to God. This is done by allowing God to mold through prayer, personal devotions, and scripture. D. S. Whitney gives excellent advice on scripture study by suggesting the following three steps: (1) setting aside time, daily, (2) using a reading plan, and (3) meditating on a verse, phrase, or word. White also believes that further benefit can be gained from journaling and self evaluation.

*The Effective Pastor* also provides practical information on preaching. White likens it to a doctor bringing medicine to the sick. The pastor has the privilege of bringing scripture, medicine for the soul, to the congregation. In doing so, he/she must apply it to people's lives and provide a balanced diet of the scriptures, by utilizing the whole Bible. White quotes Robert Murray McCheyne's prayer as a model prayer: "Lord, forgive my sins, pour your Spirit upon us and take for yourself the glory." (p. 58).

The pastor must practice good listening skills in his/her ministry. White says that this puts people in a better position to live their lives for God. Good listening shows compassion. An important part of listening is body language. Fifty five percent of one's impact on a person is through gestures, facial expression, and posture. Choosing a warm, safe environment also increases the ability to communicate. White says this should include pictures on the wall and comfortable chairs.

*The Effective Pastor* provides practical information. White strengthens his message through the use of Bible verses and quotes by famous people at the beginning of each chapter. He also encourages application and evaluation by including exercises at the end of many of the chapters. An extensive bibliography promotes further study. This book should be added to seminary libraries as well as to every pastor's personal book collection.

Ellen Clodfelter

Mark Yantzi, *Sexual Offending and Restoration*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1998. 256 pp., paper, \$13.99.

The scourge of sexual abuse has only received attention in scholarly journals since 1974 when *Psychological Abstracts* began seeing such a significant number of research reports on the topic to warrant a separate category heading for "incest" in their subject index. The increase in public awareness of sexual abuse in general has resulted

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in society's dismissal of the notion that this is a rare occurrence. While there is a steadily increasing number of books addressing the resolution of victim issues stemming from early sexual traumatization, far less concern is given to the issues driving perpetrators and the benefits from an offender facing the agony he or she has caused. The continuation of silence and secrecy in this area only serves to take power away from the victim, especially given the ineptness of the current judicial system to rehabilitate offenders and do anything significant to remediate the pain of survivors.<sup>1</sup>

To fill the silence in this crucial area, Mark Yantzi provides a compelling case entitled *Sexual Offending and Restoration*. The focus of the book is on the offended and advocates a balanced response between empathy for the offender with stark awareness of how their actions have harmed others. Yantzi enlists the insights of eight others, four men and four women, some of whom were victims and others perpetrators, to form a "Book Reference Group." This non-therapeutic group fills the book with their own comments forged from their group experience.

Before Yantzi explicates his case for "Restorative Justice," he provides introductory information on the effects of sexual abuse and why sexual abuse occurs (chapters 2-3). These chapters are cursory and sometimes simplistic.<sup>2</sup> The core of Yantzi's message begins in chapter 4 where he introduces "Restorative Justice." Yantzi criticizes the judicial system for formalizing the attempts to right wrongs and taking the process virtually completely from the hands of those most involved: the victim and the offender. Restorative Justice sees value in having the victims and offenders meet. It processes sexual offenses in a manner that is both "in the system, but not of the system."<sup>3</sup> Restorative Justice is an alternative to the current societal swing from punishment to rehabilitation in dealing with offenders. Both approaches focus blame on offenders and are pessimistic about their ability to change. Also, they do not aid in prevention, nor help victims heal. Restorative Justice emphasizes responsibility in the community.

A crucial observation that Yantzi makes is that criminal actions are symptoms that offenders are disconnected from broader society in any meaningful way.<sup>4</sup> Restorative justice sees those who violate sexually not as diseased, but as acting out of a deep and habitual emotional isolation from meaningful personal relationships. Restorative Justice seeks to reconnect the offending person with the community while taking responsibility for her/her actions. Another aspect of Restorative Justice is restitution, that is, that the offender make some form of payment for the harm done.<sup>5</sup>

Chapters 5 and 6 attempt to exemplify the application of Restorative Justice in not only an all too common step-father/step-daughter scenario, but also to a situation where a church leader is the abuser. Chapters 7-13 put a wrench to the nuts and bolts behind the complex issues of healing. Addressed are such things as recognizing wounds, forgiveness, how to respond to the offended, applying Restorative Justice in difficult cases and providing some examples where this approach has been effective.

While I admire Yantzi's work, one of the concerns I have is an undercurrent that downplays the outrage toward those who have offended.<sup>6</sup> Jesus himself was irate at the abuse of a child and threatened strict punishment for the guilty (Matthew 18:1-9). While some who abuse sexually are open to restoration, not all will be. With the strength

of compulsivity associated with this atrocity, perhaps it is safe to say that many will not. There must be some recourse to restrain and even penalize sexual predators not responsive to restorative justice. Here the pacifist bias of Yantzi's denominational tradition may bleed through. Not all will respond to a grace centered approach that seeks to address the deeper issues driving sexual exploitation. Isaiah once said to God, "When your judgments come up the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness. Though grace is shown to the wicked, they do not learn righteousness; even in a land of uprightness they go on doing evil" (26:9, 10).

Aside from this caveat, I found Yantzi's work to be a crucial voice in an area of frightening silence in our eroticized times. His work offers a viable alternative to the emotionally charged issue of how to provide a Christ-like and healing response to offenders. He does a good job showing that forgiveness in such cases is not a glib denial that terrible evil has occurred. Yantzi provides wise counsel on how a caring church should respond to offenders. Perhaps the crowning piece of Yantzi's work is his careful structuring of a facilitated dialogue between a sexual offender and his/her victims, particularly when the abuse has occurred in a family. The book is sensitive, thorough and is written in an easy to read format. The Book Reference Group's comments supplement the author's considerable academic and experiential knowledge of the subject. While they are not intended to provide a strict guideline for healing, they aid in providing identification with deeper issues, which helps to disentangle the emotional knot felt not just by many victims, but also offenders.

<sup>1</sup>Mark Yantzi, *Sexual Offending and Restoration* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1998), 9.

<sup>2</sup>For example, sexual abuse is considered a logical outcome of patriarchal values. Yantzi comes close to *assuming* that patriarchy *necessarily* results in increasing drive for power that is left beyond accountability. There are far too many cases of white male heads of households who are appropriately handling their power and do not abuse. Sexual abuse doesn't result from patriarchy, but from the sinful nature of *some* who abuse patriarchal power *and* the later retaliations of those disempowered by their authority. The problem is less in the system than in those who use it to their devious advantage. In fairness, this is acknowledged later by group member "Gary." See 42-44.

<sup>3</sup>Yantzi, 54.

<sup>4</sup>I might add that this disconnection likely is in the areas of either nurturance or discipline. Nurturance builds self-confidence and discipline curtails self-confidence from being used in self-serving or harmful ways. Both are necessary for good social adjustment. They are usually most consistently provided in the home.

<sup>5</sup>Yantzi, 57-59.

<sup>6</sup>Yantzi, 47.

Jeffery S. Stevenson, ATS D.Min. Student



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Everett L. Worthington, Jr. *Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling: A Guide to Brief Therapy* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999. 296 pp., hardcover, \$25.

Only about 50% of clients seeking marital therapy emerge with well-functioning marriages that last over three years beyond treatment. Disturbed by this statistic, Everett L. Worthington offers *Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling*, which chronicles a Christian oriented, brief approach to marital therapy drawn eclectically from various theoretical frameworks. The author suggests that much of the failure in traditional marital therapy is not only that the couples usually come with a low motivation to work, but also that the process gets bogged down in the morass of negative couple interactions. In short, therapy does little to infuse hope and failure rate is inordinately high compared to other types of issues. So this approach emphasizes hope.

*Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling* seeks to help couples with marital difficulties in less than ten sessions primarily by a three part hope building strategy: 1) fostering motivation (*will* power to change); 2) showing couples tangible ways to change (*way*power to change) and 3) helping them learn to wait on God's work in their marriage (*wait*power). After summarizing the theory in the first part of his book, Worthington exemplifies "over one hundred in-session interventions and homework assignments to flesh out the theory" (18). He sees hope-focused marital therapy as a blueprint for treatment that describes the therapy's goal (to produce stronger marriages), focus (promote hope), your strategy (to correct weaknesses in valuing love, faith and work), potential target areas (9 possible areas, based on assessment) and interventions.

The nine potential target areas that the counselor assesses are the couples': 1) central beliefs and values; 2) core vision for the marriage; 3) skills in confession/forgiveness; 4) communication; 5) conflict resolution; 6) cognition; 7) closeness; 8) complicating factors and commitment. After expanding on each of these items, the remainder of the book provides specific therapeutic interventions for each area. Flanking this section of the book are two chapters dealing with insights and practical suggestions on precounseling and assessment on the front end and a chapter on the back end that hypothesizes twelve essentials for hope-focused therapy to be effective.

The approach differs from traditional marriage counseling (cf. Everett L. Worthington, *Marriage Counseling: A Christian Approach*) in various ways. For example, the latter expects most of the change to occur during the treatment, whereas the hope-focused anticipates changes to accrue post treatment. Also, for hope-focused treatment, the therapeutic relationship between the counselor and client is crucial, but the client is the fundamental change agent.

Worthington's work is carefully distilled from a blending of sound time-tested principles, the author's own practical experience and biblical truth. The model is highly pragmatic and does not get sidetracked by irrelevant and vain pursuits so common to the modern counseling endeavor, e.g., subconscious causes or cognitive structures for long standing behavioral patterns.



Worthington gave the refreshing illustration of someone correcting his tennis swing when he was younger. The swing was not corrected by delving into his past or unconscious motivations or cognitive structures. Instead, "he demonstrated. I observed"(23-4).

Worthington's style is readable, his material is well organized and the book lends itself to ready adaptation by both the beginning counselor and the experienced but searching marital therapist. Yet Worthington conveys that he is aware that "one size does not fit all" and provides some criteria specifically for those who would most benefit from hope-focused counseling (21, 22). Worthington produces strong chapters on promoting confession and forgiveness, strengthening communication and aiding conflict resolution, but he also pulls therapy out of the remedial to the preventative.

I found the second section of Worthington's work to be at times tedious and overwhelming as I moved from intervention to intervention. This is not necessarily a criticism of his work or approach, but an unavoidable outcome of the complexity of marital issues and the wide scope of issues the book seeks to summarize. Worthington has his hand on the pulse of the field of marital therapy and eclectically draws from a wide sample of what the most effective practitioners are saying. (The author generously quotes efficacious techniques from Willard Harley, John Mordechai Gottman, Norman Wright, Gary Chapman, Neil Clark Warren, Larry Crabb and John Stuart.) Perhaps Worthington's interest in brevity is why some of the interventions seem simplistic. Therapeutic approaches are like budgets—they look fine on paper until mixed with reality!

At times I wondered if Worthington separates hope-focused therapy too far from spiritual and ethical concerns (20). While it is true that a Christian marital therapist is not entitled to preach at or proselytize his/her clients, neither can solid counsel and interventions be given apart from some attention to the spiritual well-being of the client. Spirituality is a *crucial* component for everything one seeks to do in strengthening the marriage. It is not a competing goal, but a facilitating one.

While the brief approach to therapy is a good ideal to shoot for, the realities of the severity and complexities of marital problems (not always clear even after a thorough initial assessment), the lack of interest and motivation in the clients and the resolution of deeply engrained behavioral interactions are not always as easily moved. Still, Worthington's work is a rock solid strategy for helping couples progress through crisis, while equipping them with skills to effectively manage future conflict and to implement positive behavioral cycles within the dyad.

Jeffery S. Stevenson

Sarah Horton, *Web Teaching Guide: A Practical Approach to Creating Course Web Sites*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000, 242 pp. \$15.95 paperback.

Ever wondered how technology could enhance your teaching? As the title suggests, *Web Teaching Guide* is a practical approach for educators who seek to enhance their teaching by adding a course web site. This book is not to be confused with a guide

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for online teaching although many thoughts and applications are transferable to online teaching.

This book is a great resource for educators because it is pedagogically focused rather than technologically focused. Horton does give enough helpful technological information but with all the different programs available for creating web sites, it would be impossible to cover them all in one book. There appears to be more books available for the mechanics of web page production and it is refreshing to see a book such as this one that focuses on the underlying issues of why a course web site is a good teaching and learning tool.

This book is formatted into five chapters that walk both the novice and the expert through the stages that are necessary for the creation of a successful website. These are: planning, developing, creating, using, assessing. The total space of this book dedicated to the planning and developing the site exceeds the space dedicated to the creation of the site. It is refreshing for me to see the amount of time and energy dedicated to the planning and developing BEFORE the actual creation of the web site is attempted. The author stresses the need for the developer to have a clear understanding of how the site will be used and how it will enhance the course. Horton does a wonderful job helping the developer understand that the web is a different genre and that we need to know the potential users of the sites and what the real purpose of the site is. For instance, it is a fact that most web readers will not read large blocks of text online. What is one to do if the materials necessary for the class are too large? The author addresses different ways in which you can format text to make it readable online. This is just one of the many ways in which Horton gives the reader valuable assistance in planning a useable website.

Since information on the web is highly visual and interactive, Horton discusses how to make the pages attractive while adding elements such as interaction and usability. The addition of pictures from actual web sites gives us a greater understanding of what visually works on a site and what to avoid. I personally found myself jotting notes in the margins and inside the covers of this book.

One of the most helpful features of the book is the section summaries where Horton lists all the pertinent questions the website creator needs to ask in order to create the most effective web site. This handy tool enables the reader to incorporate the information presented in a practical way for the readers' current project.

I highly recommend this book to any educator who has plans to use the web to enhance classroom teaching. Every educator will learn something new and will be surprised at how this genre can enhance teaching and learning.

Vickie Taylor

John Polkinghorne, *Science and Theology: An Introduction*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998. 144 pp., \$19.00.

A professor at Cambridge, England, John Polkinghorne has focused most of his writing on the interface of science and theology. With degrees in both disciplines, he is a Fellow of the Royal Society and also an ordained priest in the Anglican Church. He wrote four books regarding science/religion prior to this one, and has published more on the subject since the release of *Science and Theology*. He is a frequent speaker at international conferences which explore the boundaries between science and religion.

The book under review is the product of his time at General Theological Seminary in New York, lecturing on science and theology. The author sees it as a basic textbook for college classes that want to discuss the interface of the two domains. In terms of that goal, it succeeds very well. Both science and theology majors could profit from this book. For that matter, many students in other fields could also profit from the book, for he explains theories and propositions in language that students can understand. However, I doubt whether most students could process the book unless they were in their upperclass years. The book requires students who excel in analysis, synthesis, and critical evaluation. It would help considerably if they had some background in philosophy.

The introduction of the book (pp. 1-3) indicates the author's wish to begin with foundation issues of both disciplines, particularly their historical and methodological perspectives. He then moves to more detailed issues: current scientific theories and how they could affect our understanding of humanity and God. Next, he considers what a natural theology might suggest about God and moves on to specific issues in Christian theology based upon Scripture. It is Polkinghorne's conviction that there is nothing in authentic science that can invalidate the Christian claims regarding Christ, including his resurrection from the dead. He concludes the book with two explorations: whether scientific approaches to the universe might provide a topic where the various world religions could have a fruitful dialogue (Ch. 7), and what are the limits of scientific exploration (Ch. 8). This final chapter discusses ethics in science. The author does not believe everything possible is permissible. There are moral bounds to scientific experimentation.

The book has many features that commend it. Primarily it introduces students to the more significant scientific findings and theories of the last two centuries. A wide range of topics are considered, along with the leading proponents of various interpretations. Most of these are subjected to the criticism that Polkinghorne and others have provided. Thus, one learns that some scientific theories are not universally supported.

Perhaps the chief contribution of the book is to underscore the necessity of both disciplines for a satisfactory understanding of life. Polkinghorne is convinced the two are compatible. His book should help young adults to deal with the insights of both domains with less conflict than their parents experienced. While endorsing much of the scientific method and taking seriously many of science's convictions, he is quick to point out its limitations and to critique the field, when its proponents go beyond pure science and

## Book Reviews

make metaphysical claims to a worldview dominance that is not warranted. Here the author is certain that theology has the better claims to truth.

Nevertheless, Polkinghorne's resolution to science/faith questions will not satisfy all Christians. Some will be troubled by his endorsement of evolution as the best account of "how" the universe functions (even though he insists that Christian theism has the best explanation to "why" there is a universe). Others will take exception to his view that Genesis 3 is a myth about the origin of sin, particularly in light of Pauline theology which makes the Adam-Christ contrast so significant. Many conservative Christians will find his "critical realist" reading of Scripture hard to accept, since it appears to diminish the objective truth side of the Bible.

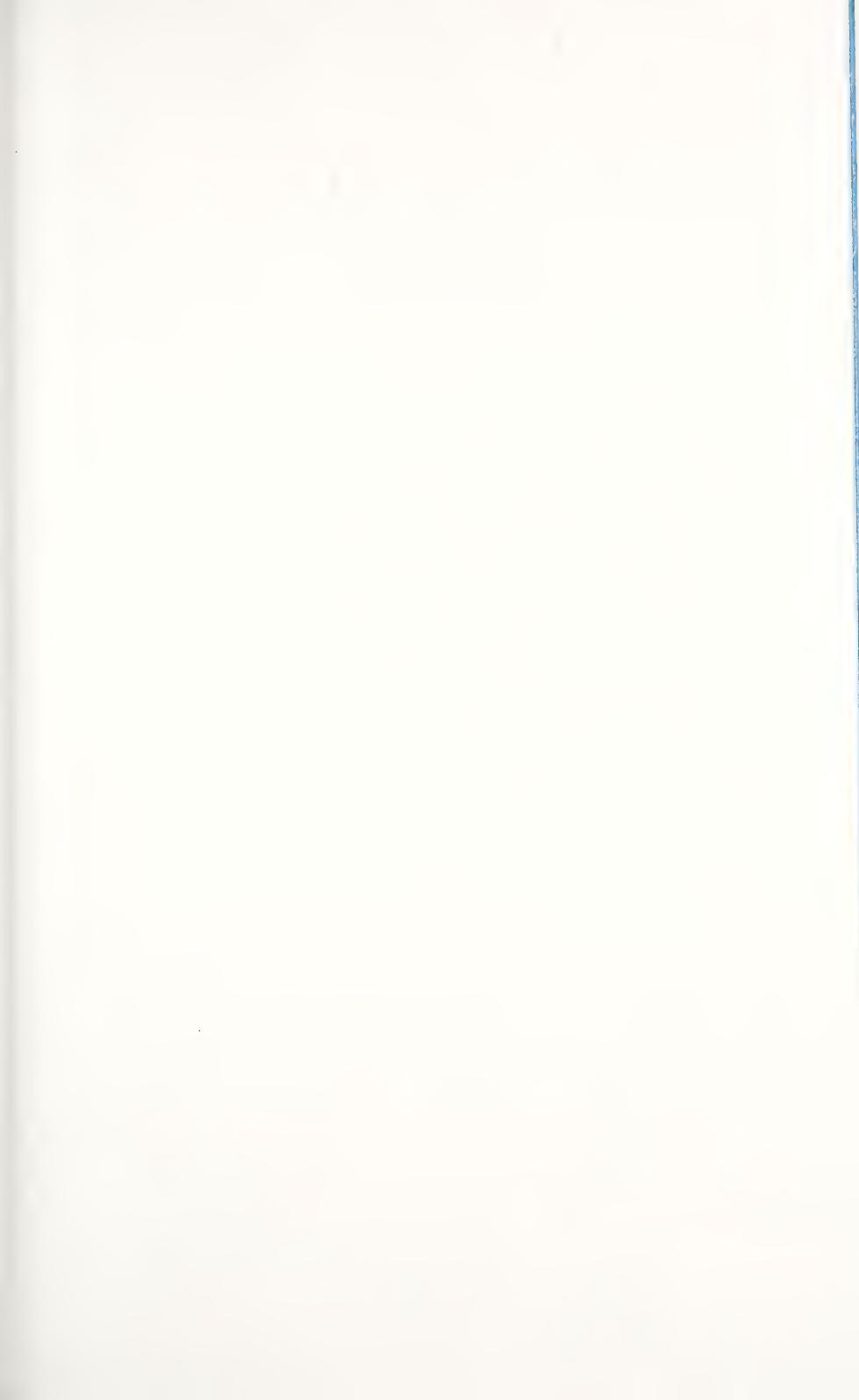
However readers respond to Polkinghorne's stances, the book is a success. It makes both sides realize that we are in a genuine dialogue as equal partners. At best, one can only issue progress reports, for both disciplines are in flux. Better answers to some contested issues still lie in the future. Neither discipline can claim to have vanquished the other. If there could be less "contest" and more "cooperation," satisfactory answers might be found more readily. If this scenario were to play itself out, no one would be happier than Dr. John Polkinghorne.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.



















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## Editor's Introduction

It is our privilege to share yet again the fruit of the labors of Ashland Theological Seminary faculty, alumni, students, and friends. Before introducing these, however, we wish to welcome new members of the ATS faculty and administration. Robert Douglass, an ATS alumnus and Ph.D. candidate in theology at Duquesne University has joined us in the area of worship and music, and Eugene Heacock, who has an M.Div. from Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary where he is also a doctoral candidate, is the new Executive Director of the Sandburg Leadership Center.

This year we yet again offer a diverse collection of material. Several pieces had their origin in oral presentation. Dr M. Daniel Carroll R. was our Fall Lecture speaker of 2003, and we present a version of one of his presentations, which were very well received. The Seminary hosted a one-day seminar on the family in conjunction with the local chapter of Christians for Biblical Equality ([www.cbeinternational.org](http://www.cbeinternational.org)). The topic is relevant to everyone in ministry, and it engendered lively discussion. Three of the presentations from that conference are included here. The final oral presentation was by David deSilva, who was an invited lecturer at a Bible exhibition in Canton, which had an impressive response from the community. Another article, by Brenda Colijn, was prompted by a previous Fall Lecture speaker, Dr Clark Pinnock, and his stimulating presentations on 'openness theology'. The final two articles are by ATS alumni, one pursuing doctoral work and the other active in pastoral ministry. We cherish such contributions from those whose lives our institution has helped shape.

As this holiday season approaches, may you enjoy God's gracious gifts with friends and family. We trust that these gifts presented here in this volume might bless you as well. As God gave the most wonderful gift of his Son to all who are so undeserving, may you also find opportunity to share his love with others who are in the same places of need where we once were.

David W. Baker

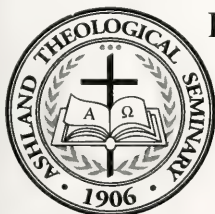


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CONNECTING, RENEWING, LEADING, TRANSFORMING...



## Considering the Case for “Prophetic Ethics”: Surveying Options and Recognizing Obstacles<sup>1</sup>

By M. Daniel Carroll R.\*

### Introduction

Evangelicals have always shown interest in the prophetic books. Because of our commitment to the Bible as the Word of God, we have been very diligent in our study of this literature: we work at uncovering their historical background, some learn Hebrew and work at exegesis to better mine their treasures, and all of us try to learn their theological message in order to communicate and apply that truth. In some circles—especially at a lay, popular level—the fascination with eschatology has generated a variety of detailed scenarios about the future based on some of these prophetic books, particularly Ezekiel and Daniel.

Interest in the prophetic is commendable. At the same time, however, the prophetic books can and should orient us in another important area of our existence and faith, an area which often has been overlooked: social ethics. It is ironic that we as evangelicals, who are committed to a high view of the authority of the Scripture and who are proud of our biblical knowledge, have not given this fundamental part of the prophetic message the attention it deserves. It is time that evangelicals reread the prophetic literature and recognize its contemporary relevance. *Theologically*, in light of our commitment to the Bible, it is inexcusable to ignore this important task. *Missiologically*, it is crucial that we do so in order to be able to reflect better upon our calling and obligations in a fallen world.

Sometimes when evangelicals have entered the public arena to speak out or act on issues, it has been sobering to witness how unprepared we have been to articulate clearly a substantive and sensitive (even sensible!) biblical position. This has repeatedly been the case in Latin America, where I have spent much of my life. While it is true that there has been phenomenal church growth in several countries south of the border, the lack of adequate biblical and theological thinking in the analysis of sociopolitical problems and in the elaboration of viable solutions has been equally evident. Over the last two

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## Considering the Case for "Prophetic Ethics"

decades there has been a growing desire among Latin American evangelicals to have a more visible profile, but the results thus far have not always been encouraging. One could mention, for example, the controversial presidencies of Efraín Ríos Montt and Jorge Serrano Elías in Guatemala, the manipulation of Peruvian evangelical leaders in 1990 by Alberto Fujimori during his successful election campaign, the consistent inability of evangelicals to offer an appropriate theological orientation during the bloody civil wars that our countries suffered for so many years, and the recent machinations of some evangelical politicians in the Brazilian congress.<sup>2</sup>

This is not to say that in Latin America evangelicalism has not had a constructive impact on many individuals, families, and the social fabric. Sociological and anthropological studies acknowledge the positive results of conversion and church attendance: the strengthening of marriages, the efforts to improve the educational levels of the younger generation, greater honesty in the workplace, the increased valuing of women, abstinence from alcohol consumption, and a greater willingness to be charitable to the needy.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, these personal and familial "ethical impulses" rarely are guided by any sort of sustained theological thinking; rather, they are more the product of a vague Christian ethos.

In contrast, North American evangelicals have a long history of sociopolitical thinking and involvement. One wonders, though, how widespread such biblically informed considerations might actually be. In certain sectors of the evangelicalism in the United States there is a strong emphasis on accentuating and marketing the pragmatic and quantifiable at the expense of the reflective. Seminars, conferences, all sorts of publications, and even seminary curricula can seek to reduce the Christian life to a manageable set of easy steps and formulae, or they highlight numerical growth and economic success as signs of divine blessing. Many of these trends may not be of much help in exploring how to live out the ethical implications of the biblical message in an increasingly postmodern and post-Christian world. Not a few churches, groups, and believers prefer the simple, the emotive, and the immediately practical. In its worst manifestations, all of this can lead tragically to a superficiality that celebrates its ignorance.

In our complex context, here and abroad, how might a return to the prophets for ethical guidance help? What might being "prophetic" mean? The following discussion will survey how various movements and thinkers from different parts of the globe have appealed to the prophets. Subsequently, we will mention some possible reasons why evangelicals have not made use of the prophetic literature for ethics.



### Prophetic Ethics in Contexts of Injustice

In this section we present six examples of those who have looked to the prophets for ethical insight and inspiration. The first two come from the “Majority” or Two-Thirds World—that is, those parts of the earth that represent the vast preponderance of the human population. One example is drawn from Latin America, the other from Africa. The next four examples represent the thinking of authors from Great Britain and the United States. The problems of each of these contexts, of course, are not the same, but every example exhibits a desire to plumb the prophetic in the face of serious social ills.

### The “Majority” (or, Two-Thirds) World

When most think of socially engaged theologies, Liberation Theology comes readily to mind, and it is there that we begin. Latin American Liberation Theology has utilized the Old Testament prophets in two principal ways. On the one hand, liberation theologians and biblical scholars cite prophetic texts to substantiate the “preferential option for the poor” and their critique of unjust social and economic structures. Interestingly, they have not used the same textual method.<sup>4</sup> For instance, José Porfirio Miranda employed source and tradition criticism to uncover what was for him the essence of the prophetic message: the absolute demand for justice.<sup>5</sup> Croatto utilized contemporary literary theory to speak of *relecturas* (i.e., re-readings) of the Bible from the perspective of the poor;<sup>6</sup> on other occasions, redaction criticism has been his tool to contextualize his studies in the book of Isaiah.<sup>7</sup> Articles in *Revista de interpretación bíblica latinoamericana (RIBLA)*, a journal published in Costa Rica, demonstrate the methodological diversity among liberationists. No matter the textual approach chosen, however, all these biblical efforts are driven by a common cause on behalf of the oppressed.

Second, Liberation Theology has challenged Christian churches and leaders to take up a “prophetic voice.”<sup>8</sup> To be prophetic, in this view, means denouncing injustice in solidarity with the poor, raising their consciousness about their suffering and the possibility for change, and announcing the hope of an achievable, historical utopia that would bring a new sociopolitical, economic, and cultural order to Latin America. In a recent issue of *Revista latinoamericana de teología* Rafael de Silvatte compares the persecution of the prophets in ancient Israel with the killing of six Jesuits in 1989 on the campus of the Universidad Centroamericana in San Salvador.<sup>9</sup> He lists several reasons why prophets—both then and now—are rejected: they condemn an idolatrous religion that legitimates the government’s ideology and does not question its

## Considering the Case for "Prophetic Ethics"

injustice, and they announce the ethical demands of the God of Life. Those Jesuits assassinated (martyred) by the Salvadoranean army paid for their convictions with their life:

Over against the frequent accusation that they got what they deserved, that they stuck their nose where they did not belong, that they suffered the consequences of their sin, what the persecution and martyrdom of the prophets does is clarify the significance of their life: a life in communion with the Suffering Servant and, therefore, in communion with God himself and his feelings of solidarity with suffering humankind.<sup>10</sup>

For di Sivatte, their sacrifice continues to motivate those who have the courage to take up the prophetic mantle.

This focus on the prophetic also surfaced on the other side of the world, in another context of extreme political tension and social violence. In the Republic of South Africa, to the complexities of oppression was added the poison of racism. To protest apartheid, in 1986 a significant number of Christian leaders signed *The Kairos Document*.<sup>11</sup> The document describes the three basic theological options taken by the churches in that country and argues for the need to embrace the third, a "prophetic theology."

First, there is the "theology of the state." This theological stance defended the status quo of the apartheid regime on the basis of passages like Romans 13:1-7 and taught that Christian citizens should obey the authorities. It never questioned the inequalities of that society; any civil disobedience was labeled as communist motivated. Second, and in contrast to the first, "Church theology" did admit the unfairness of the system. It sought reconciliation between the warring parties and, accordingly, decried the use of violence by those who opposed apartheid. It failed, however, to recognize the institutional violence perpetuated by government forces; it was unable to appreciate that justice at all levels was a prerequisite for authentic reconciliation, and it naively believed that governmental reform and personal conversion would provide a sufficient solution to the national crisis. "Prophetic theology," the third option, was different. It underscored the importance of social analysis to better understand the multiple evil mechanisms of the context; it read the Bible for insights to help confront injustice; and it looked to Christian history for models of movements that had brought significant changes to their own situation. South African churches were to be beacons of light in the dark world of apartheid and point people to the kingdom of God.

It is interesting to see how some evaluate all those efforts today. In an article titled "Where Have All the Prophets Gone?" J. G. Strydom lists the things that anti-apartheid prophets had denounced years before, such as political repression, the corruption of the judiciary, lack of equal educational opportunities, structural violence, and religious hypocrisy. Then he contrasts those stirring convictions and brave actions of yesteryear with the deafening silence of those same individuals before similar maladies under the new government.<sup>12</sup> The South African official state of affairs indeed had changed, but much of the social sickness remains. Some of those heroic voices now are compromised by positions of power and comfort; others perhaps thought that with the fall of the white government their mandate had ended. Here we have a lament for the prophetic voice of an earlier time, one that at present lacks moral authority.

### Great Britain and the United States

We begin this section with an author from Great Britain. In *Prophecy and Praxis* Robin Gill, professor of ethics at Edinburgh University, seeks to answer the question: Is it possible for the Christian Church to maintain a prophetic voice in society, when its ideas and structures have been so thoroughly influenced by that very same society?<sup>13</sup> In many ways, he says, the mores and actions of Christians are indistinguishable from those around them. What is more, the Church continues to lose its socio-cultural and political status. These realities complicate the prophetic task, which Gill takes to be the explicit proclamation of the implications of the Christian faith in every sphere of life. Those limitations signify that prophecy in this specific sense will be limited to a few individuals and cannot be the role of the established Church. What does correspond to the Church is permeating society with the general moral values of the faith. This can be an ironic (and often frustrating) undertaking, since the Western world continues to respect these values to some degree, even as it consciously and inexorably marches to a comprehensive secularism. This mission of reminding the populace of these fundamental truths is slow work and requires a long term vision; yet, it is just as important to society's health as what the prophets must do. In the end, therefore, Gill envisions two kinds of prophetic activity—one individual, the other institutional.

The call to be prophetic is found as well in the United States. Glenn Tinder portrays what he calls the "prophetic stance."<sup>14</sup> His starting point is John 3:16 ("God so loved the world..."), which in his mind establishes the dignity of each person and God's solidarity with humankind. These twin notions are the basis of the believer's political obligations. The prophetic stance understands



## Considering the Case for "Prophetic Ethics"

this, but at the same time is realistic. It is realistic, because it acknowledges the consequences of the Fall: There can be no actions done from totally pure motives, nor can there ever be a perfect society. It is realistic, too, because eschatology relativizes everything. In light of a future sovereignly directed by God, all human projects are finite, flawed, and sooner or later must pass away. For Tinder, this stance is individual, not institutional. It is characterized by a close observation of the world and a careful deliberation about the meaning of history. It also understands the importance of patience and civility for responsible service to the community.

The activist and theologian Jim Wallis presents his notion of a "prophetic vision" in his book *The Soul of Politics*.<sup>15</sup> Wallis tries to position himself between what he sees as two extreme Christian tendencies. On the one hand, there are the conservatives, who refuse to show due disquiet for political, racial, and economic injustice; they prefer to limit their concerns to personal spirituality, family issues, and select doctrinal disputes. On the other hand, there are the liberals, who can be naïve in their support of social change and who minimize the need for personal conversion. Each side of the divide could do with renewal.

In the Bible Wallis finds two elements that define the prophetic vocation that could secure personal and social transformation: the courage to proclaim the divine demand for justice and a creative imagination that can offer an alternative vision to the destructive reality in which we live.<sup>16</sup> Key ingredients of the prophetic vision include the "conversion" to compassion for the poor, advocacy for minorities that goes beyond the assimilation agenda of the majority culture, support for the equality of women, ecological sensitivity, and the conviction that the future is not closed and that things can be changed. Wallis believes that individuals and social movements that have this vision are emerging from many cultures and religions.

Our last example of the prophetic comes from Os Guinness' *Prophetic Untimeliness*.<sup>17</sup> By "prophetic untimeliness" Guinness means the ability to discern the times and live faithfully. This skill requires a clear understanding of the profound implications of the Creation and the Fall, which is the biblical foundation for a worldview that allows one to be both for and against society. From this perspective, it is possible to stand with integrity against a culture that moves at a crazy pace and that is driven by seductive and self-destructive fads. In their desire to be relevant and popular, Christians can slide too easily into compromising their principles, unaware that there are elements of their faith and the lifestyle demanded by God that can never be negotiated. Guinness's impassioned indictment merits quoting:



In its place [that is, of a properly Christian worldview] a new evangelicalism is arriving in which therapeutic self-concern overshadows knowing God, spirituality displaces theology, end-times escapism crowds out day-to-day discipleship, marketing triumphs over mission, references to opinion polls outweigh reliance on biblical exposition, concerns for power and relevance are more obvious than concern for piety and faithfulness, talk of reinventing the church has replaced prayer for revival, and the characteristic evangelical passion for missionary enterprise is overpowered by the all-consuming drive to sustain the multiple business empires of the booming evangelical subculture.<sup>18</sup>

“Resistance thinking” (a term Guinness takes from C. S. Lewis) is what is called for, not uncritical cultural adaptation, conformity, and assimilation. He declares that prophetic untimeliness is distinguished by the deep conviction that it cannot fit in; it is impatient and dissatisfied with the world. Guinness ends with a call to return to the Church’s historical roots and to the transcendent (and timeless) truths of the Christian faith.

One could multiply examples of those who are call for a return to a prophetic vocation or to a prophetic ethics. These voices from around the world and from across the breadth of theological and ecclesiastical persuasions have a profound sense of social malaise and are convinced that a word from God must be heard—both to denounce sin (however that is conceived) and to offer hope of a different future. In the prophets these authors find exemplars of spokespersons, who stood up for the right even in the face of strong opposition, and an ethical message that transcends the frontiers of ancient Israel. It is not our concern to evaluate these various proposals. Rather, the point is to emphasize that the prophetic literature can serve, and is serving, as an important ethical source. The question to which we now turn is why evangelicals in the United States have not made more use of the prophets in their own ethical thinking. We suggest that there are at least two reasons for this neglect.

## **The Marginalization of the Prophets in Evangelical Ethics**

### **Limiting Old Testament Ethics to the Law**

To begin with, when evangelicals go to the Old Testament for ethics, they usually restrict their attention to the Law. For instance, in his work on Old Testament ethics Walter Kaiser declares categorically, “The heart of Old

### Considering the Case for "Prophetic Ethics"

Testament ethics is to be placed squarely on the explicit commands found mainly in the Pentateuch, but to a lesser degree in the Prophets and Wisdom Books."<sup>19</sup> His book is organized around the theme of holiness, which he feels is the key concern of the first five books of the Bible. Chapters are dedicated to analyzing the four prominent collections of laws: the Decalogue (Exod. 20:1-17; Deut. 5:6-21), the Book of the Covenant (Exod. 20:22-23:33), the Holiness Code (Lev. 18-20), and Deuteronomy. In several publications Christopher Wright presents his own ideas about how best to use the laws that determined the structure, and hence the morality, of Israelite society.<sup>20</sup> His extrapolation of the Law to contemporary society develops along (and here I use his terminology) paradigmatic, typological, and eschatological lines. He has devoted his efforts particularly to the Jubilee (Lev. 25) and the implications of that legislation for today. For both Kaiser and Wright, then, the Law provides the foundation for the ethics of the rest of the Old Testament.

Of course, the Law does play a crucial role in Old Testament ethics. Nevertheless, in the field of Old Testament ethics research, others study the narratives of the Pentateuch (and other parts of the Old Testament) and do not limit themselves to the law codes.<sup>21</sup> Recent publications take the entire Hebrew canon into consideration.<sup>22</sup> For our part, we would want to underscore that, although the Law in some measure does sustain the ethics of the prophets, there is no need to minimize their contribution to a more complete Old Testament ethics.

This tendency to focus almost exclusively on the Law is also evident among those who are more theologians than biblical scholars and cannot be limited to any one school of doctrine. It is most obvious in Reformed thought. Historically, Calvinistic circles have spoken about three uses of the Law: First, the Law is a tutor that leads us to repentance and thus to Christ; second, it can serve as a moral guide to society; and third, the Law reveals the will of God to the believer, who now is empowered by the Spirit to obey it. The second use of the Law presupposes the universal relevance of the Law; its significance, in other words, is not bound by the four walls of the Church.<sup>23</sup> It has been those sociopolitical movements shaped by reformation thinking that have tried to establish quasi-theocratic societies in different parts of the globe. The city-state of Geneva under Calvin and his successors, the rule of Oliver Cromwell in Great Britain in the seventeenth century, the Puritan experiment in the American colonies, the Afrikaner settlement in South Africa, and some of the theological tenets behind the government of Ríos Montt in Guatemala in the early 1980's come to mind as case studies of experiments in implementing the Law in concrete ways in a post-biblical context.

### Excluding Prophetic Ethics for Theological Considerations

A second reason why some evangelicals do not appeal to the prophets for ethics is because their theological system either ignores or discourages it. Here we mention three instances of this phenomenon.

There are those on the charismatic wing, who tend to identify prophecy with (and therefore limit discussions to) the supernatural gift of the Early Church and the Pentecostal movement. This kind of discussion of prophecy can range from studies of a more academic sort<sup>24</sup> to the more popular, which even provide instructions for developing that gift.<sup>25</sup> Their reading of the Old Testament prophets is especially interested in discovering the various ways of receiving revelation and verifying connections between those Old Testament experiences with those of prophets of the New Testament and, ultimately, with prophets today. The realm of social ethics, which is so central to the Old Testament prophets' calling and message, simply is not an important concern of this approach.

Some within premillennialism, especially certain strands of dispensationalism, also exclude the prophets from ethical discourse. In this case, the most fundamental reason is hermeneutics. Classical dispensationalism, for example, makes a sharp distinction between Israel and the Church.<sup>26</sup> For many, this is the *sine qua non* of the theological system itself.<sup>27</sup> The Law had been revealed to Israel during the Mosaic dispensation, but the Church now lives in the dispensation of grace. According to this scheme, the Law, as the law code of an ancient theocracy, no longer has direct bearing on the life of the believer, the Church, or the broader society, even though particular laws may suggest moral principles that are applicable.<sup>28</sup> The contemporary relevance of the prophetic books does not extend to social ethics, since they, too, like the Law, deal with the problems of a theocracy of which the Church is not a part. At this juncture, a personal story is apropos. Years ago, as I was getting ready to pursue doctoral studies, a classic dispensationalist asked me what my research topic would be. I explained that my hope was to explore how to utilize the prophets (in particular, the book of Amos) to respond to the social problems of Latin America. His comment was, "The question is not *how* they should be used but rather *if* they can be used dispensationally."<sup>29</sup>

This attitude does not mean that the prophetic literature is mute, however. At least for some, whatever political significance the prophets might have is related to God's eschatological plan.<sup>30</sup> Because of the classic dispensationalist interpretation of the place of Israel in the past and future plan of God, those of this persuasion regularly are firm supporters of the modern state



## Considering the Case for "Prophetic Ethics"

of Israel, a position with obvious implications for electoral politics and foreign policy. This fact has made this brand of dispensationalism the target of criticism from both theological<sup>31</sup> and socio-historical points of view.<sup>32</sup>

A third cause of the neglect of the prophets for ethics among evangelicals in the United States has historical roots and applies to the movement in general. This reluctance can be traced back to the end of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth, to the conflict between fundamentalism and the more liberal wing of the nation's seminaries and denominations. At that time, heated debates centered around the Social Gospel and the sociopolitical responsibilities of Christians. Those of the Social Gospel side did appeal to the prophets and their social critiques.<sup>33</sup> As has been well documented, one of the repercussions of that controversy was what has been called the "Great Reversal," the turning away by more conservative groups from a heritage of social involvement.<sup>34</sup> They came to view with suspicion any hint that social action might be part of the task of the Church, which increasingly was narrowed to evangelism. Consequently, the profound ethical significance of the prophetic literature did not (and does not) find a hearing. This stance had repercussions for missions, too, as a more spiritualized conception of Christian mission was carried to other parts of the world by the generation of missionaries spurred on to service by that controversy. The churches that they planted and the theological institutions they founded perpetuated this reticence to engage the context socially, politically, and economically. Evangelical leaders and thinkers today in Latin America and elsewhere, while appreciative of the sacrifices of those pioneer missionaries, decry this theological legacy that disconnected them from the pressing issues of their countries.<sup>35</sup>

The reasons for ignoring the prophetic literature for ethics within North American evangelicalism are varied. They include focusing on other parts of the Old Testament for ethics and overlooking the ethical material in those books because of certain theological emphases. Historical factors have also played a part. This inattention is out of step with the insights and power to lift a voice before the sins of society that others have gleaned from the prophets.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is modest. I have tried to raise an awareness of the need to go to the prophets for ethics. On the one hand, we have seen how theologians of different persuasions have recognized the contribution of the prophets to ethics. We also have looked briefly at several reasons why evangelicals have failed to do so. It behooves us to return to this key part of the biblical canon to seek guidance for mission today. There is much that we can



learn from others, and there is much more to consider about how to actually analyze the prophetic literature and apply it to the modern world.<sup>36</sup> My hope is that these reflections might help spur us on to allow the prophets to speak their word once again in fresh and powerful ways.

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<sup>1</sup>This article is based on a lecture given at Ashland Theological Seminary in October, 2003, and retains some of the style of that presentation. This was the first of four in a series titled "The Prophets and Christian Social Ethics."

<sup>2</sup> Note the diverse evaluations by, e.g., David Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990); Florencio Galindo, *El "fenómeno de las sectas" fundamentalistas: La conquista evangélica de América Latina*, sec. edn. (Navarra: Verbo Divino, 1994); Emilio Antonio Núñez, "Latin American Evangelicals and Social Responsibility: A Case Study," in *Crisis and Hope in Latin America: An Evangelical Perspective*, ed. idem and W. D. Taylor (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1996), 372-91; Everett Wilson, "Guatemalan Pentecostals: Something of Their Own," in *Power, Politics, and Pentecostals in Latin America*, ed. E. L. Cleary and H. W. Stewart-Gambino (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997), 139-62; René Padilla, "El futuro del cristianismo en América Latina: Perspectivas misionológicas," in *Iglesia, ética y poder*, ed. J. H. Yoder, L. Soliano and R. Padilla (Buenos Aires: Kairós, 1998), 62-87; Samuel Escobar, "Elementos para una evaluación de la experiencia política de los evangélicos," *Kairós* 28 (2001): 85-99; Paul Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics in Asia, Africa and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 191-280.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?*; idem and Virginia Garrard-Burnett, eds., *Rethinking Protestantism in Latin America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); David Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990); R. Andrew Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil: The Pentecostal Boom and the Pathogens of Poverty* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997).

<sup>4</sup> For an introduction to Liberation Theology hermeneutics and biblical study see M. Daniel Carroll R., *Contexts for Amos: Prophetic Poetics in Latin American Perspective*, JSOTSup 132 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 109-21, 312-19; and idem, "Liberation Theology: Latin America," in *The Oxford Illustrated Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. J. Rogerson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 316-29.

<sup>5</sup> José Porfirio Miranda, *Marx and the Bible: A Critique of the Philosophy of Oppression* (trans. J. Eagleson; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1974).

<sup>6</sup> J. Severino Croatto, *Biblical Hermeneutics: Toward a Theory of Reading as the Production of Meaning* (trans. R. R. Barr; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987).

<sup>7</sup> J. Severino Croatto, "Desmesura del poder y destino de los imperios. Exégesis de Isaías 10:5-7<sup>a</sup>," *Cuadernos de teología* 8 (1987): 7-16; "Una liturgia fúnebre por la caída del tirano (Isaías 14:4b-23)," *RIBLA* 2 (1988): 59-67; *Isaías 40-55: La liberación es posible* (Buenos Aires: Lumen, 1994); *Imaginar el futuro: Estructura y querigma del Tercer Isaías* (Buenos Aires: Lumen, 2001).

<sup>8</sup> Néstor O. Míguez, "Profecía y proyecto histórico" and Rafael Ávila P., "La profecía en América Latina", in *Misión profética de la Iglesia*, ed. P. Negre Rigor et al (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Tierra Nueva, 1981), 69-83 and 87-103, respectively; Gustavo Gutiérrez, *On Job: God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent* (trans. M. J. O'Connell; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987), 19-49; Enrique Dussel, *Ethics and Community, Liberation and Theology* 3 (trans. R. R. Barr; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988), 88-98; Ignacio Ellacuría, "Utopia and prophecy," in *Mysterium liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*, ed. idem and J. Sobrino (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993), 289-328.

<sup>9</sup> Rafael de Sivatte, "La interpelación de los profetas de ayer y hoy", *Revista latinoamericana de teología* 24 (1991), 253-80.

<sup>10</sup> De Sivatte, 278 (my translation).

<sup>11</sup> *The Kairos Document: Challenge to the Church. A Theological Comment on the Political Crisis in South Africa* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986); cf. John W. deGruchy, *Liberating Reformed Theology: A South African Contribution to the Ecumenical Debate* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991).

<sup>12</sup> J. G. Strydom, "Where Have All the Prophets Gone? The New South Africa and the Silence of the Prophets", *Old Testament Essays* 10, no. 3 (1997), 494-511.

<sup>13</sup> Robin Gill, *Prophecy and Praxis: The Social Function of the Churches* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1981).

<sup>14</sup> Glenn Tinder, *The Political Meaning of Christianity: An Interpretation* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1989).

<sup>15</sup> Jim Wallis, *The Soul of Politics: A Practical and Prophetic Vision for Change* (New York, NY: The New Press; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994).

<sup>16</sup> Here Wallis appeals to the work of Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann on the prophetic imagination.

<sup>17</sup> Os Guinness, *Prophetic Untimeliness: A Challenge to the Idol of Relevance* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003).

<sup>18</sup> Guinness, 54.

<sup>19</sup> Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward Old Testament Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), 42.

<sup>20</sup> Christopher J. H. Wright, *An Eye for an Eye: The Relevance of the Old Testament for Ethics* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1984); *Walking in the Ways of the Lord: The Ethical Authority of the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1995).

<sup>21</sup> Here and in the following note I do not limit myself to evangelical authors. See, e.g., John Barton, *Ethics and the Old Testament* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity International Press, 1998); Gordon J. Wenham, *Story as Torah: Reading the Old Testament Ethically*, Old Testament Studies (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2000); Mary E. Mills, *Biblical Morality: Moral Perspectives on Old Testament Narratives*, Heythrop Studies in Contemporary Philosophy, Religion & Theology (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001).

<sup>22</sup> Bruce C. Birch, *Let Justice Roll Down: The Old Testament, Ethics, and the Christian Life* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991); Waldemar Janzen, *Old Testament Ethics: A Paradigmatic Approach* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994); Bruce V. Malchow, *Social Justice in the Hebrew Bible* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1996); John Rogerson, *Theory and Practice in Old Testament Ethics*, edited and with an Introduction by M. Daniel Carroll R., JSOTSup 405 (London: Continuum - T. T. Clark, 2004).

<sup>23</sup> This championing of the Law for modern society has been especially propounded by theonomy, an extreme position that even those of the Reformed tradition reject.

<sup>24</sup> Wayne Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1988); Graham Houston, *Prophecy: A Gift for Today?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1989); Jack Deere, *Surprised by the Voice of God: How God Speaks Today through Prophecies, Dreams, and Visions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996).

<sup>25</sup> Mike Biddle, *Growing in the Prophetic* (Orlando, FL: Creation House, 1996); Graham Cooke, *Developing Your Prophetic Gifting* (Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, 2003). This tendency would be true in other parts of the world as well. Note, e.g., in Latin America, Bernardo Stamateas, *El don de profecía y el ministerio profético hoy*, Colección Pastoral y Consejería (Barcelona: CLIE, 1998).]

## Considering the Case for "Prophetic Ethics"

<sup>26</sup> It is essential to distinguish between "classical" or "normative" dispensationalism and "progressive" dispensationalism. The latter does not hold to several of the distinctions of the more traditional school. For an excellent discussion of the historical developments within dispensationalism and the differences between its two principal branches, see Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1993). Progressive dispensationalism is well aware of the need to rethink the ethical implications of that theological system. Note Blaising and Bock, 284-301.

<sup>27</sup> See especially Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism* (Chicago: Moody, 1995).

<sup>28</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *What You Should Know about Social Responsibility* (Chicago: Moody, 1982), 39-47; H. Wayne House y Thomas Ice, *Dominion Theology: Blessing or Curse. An Analysis of Christian Reconstructionism* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1988).

<sup>29</sup> My doctoral research was published as *Contexts for Amos*.

<sup>30</sup> The significance of eschatology for ethics is a hotly debated topic among all brands of evangelicalism. Note, e.g., Peter Kuzmič, "History and Eschatology: Evangelical Views," in *In Word and Deed: Evangelism and Social Responsibility*, ed. B. Nicholls (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 135-64; Stephen Williams, "Evangelicals and Eschatology: A Contentious Case", in *Interpreting the Bible: Essays in Honour of David F. Wright*, ed. A. N. S. Lane (Leicester: Apollos, 1997), 291-308; Richard Baukham, "Must Christian Eschatology Be Millenarian? A Response to Jürgen Moltmann," in *'The Reader Must Understand': Eschatology in Bible and Theology*, ed. K. E. Brower and M. W. Elliott (Leicester: Paternoster, 1997), 263-77; M. Daniel Carroll R., "The Power of the Future in the Present: Eschatology and Ethics in O'Donovan and Beyond", in *A Royal Priesthood: The Use of the Bible Ethically and Politically*, ed. C. Bartholomew, A. Wolters and J. Chaplin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 116-43.

<sup>31</sup> E.g., Colin Chapman, *Whose Promised Land? The Continuing Crisis over Israel and Palestine* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002); C. Marvin Pate and J. Daniel Hays, *Iraq: Babylon of the End-Times?* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003); Gary M. Burge, *Whose Land? Whose Promise? What Christians Are Not Being Told about Israel and the Palestinians* (Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2003).

<sup>32</sup> Most recently, Timothy P. Weber, *On the Road to Armageddon: How Evangelicals Became Israel's Best Friend* (Brand Rapids: Baker, 2004). This book updates and expands material in an earlier work, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism, 1875-1982*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983).



<sup>33</sup> Note Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1907), 1-43.

<sup>34</sup> David O. Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism and Social Concern*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1977). George M. Marsden is a key source here. Note his *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1980) and *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987). A landmark critique of the lack of evangelical social concern from within was Carl F. H. Henry's *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947). Because part of the Social Gospel debate centered on the meaning of the kingdom of God and its possible inauguration, classic dispensationalism had a special interest in the controversy. For an account, see Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming*, 82-104.

<sup>35</sup> Part of this criticism has been leveled at the eschatology (esp. of the dispensational variety) of the missionaries, but it is clear that the mindset against social concern cannot be limited to that. It surely was part of the equation, but earlier premillennialism did demonstrate social concern. Marsden's work is clear in this regard (*Fundamentalism and American Culture*). For Latin America, note, e.g., Samuel Escobar, "El reino de Dios, la escatología y la ética social y política en América Latina," in *El reino de Dios y América Latina*, ed. C. R. Padilla (El Paso, TX: Casa Bautista de Publicaciones, 1975), 127-56; José Míguez Bonino, *Faces of Latin American Protestantism*, transl. E. L. Stockwell (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 27-51. Non-evangelicals also have been critical of that apolitical eschatology. See Heinrich Schäfer, "El reino de la libertad: Unas consideraciones acerca de la función de la escatología milenarista en los conflictos sociales de Centroamérica," *Pasos* 31 (1990), 11-14; Jorge Pixley, "El final de la historia y la fe popular: El reino milenarista de Cristo (Ireneo y el fundamentalismo)," *Pasos* 41 (1997), 11-16. Cf. David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigms in Theology of Mission*, American Society of Missiology Series 16 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991), 313-27, 498-510.

<sup>36</sup> The succeeding three lectures at Ashland Theological Seminary did offer suggestions and examples drawn from the book of Amos. For my recent publications that deal with prophetic texts and utilize various methodologies, see "The Power of the Future in the Present"; "La ética social de los profetas y su relevancia para América Latina hoy. Parte #2: El aporte del estudio del trasfondo," *Kairós* 33 (2003): 7-29; "La ética social de los profetas y su relevancia para América Latina hoy. Parte #3: La fecundidad de la 'imaginación profética,'" *Kairós* 34 (2004): 7-24; "La ética social de los profetas y su relevancia para América Latina hoy. Parte #4: La contribución de la ética filosófica," *Kairós* 35 (2004): 7-30.

## Considering the Case for "Prophetic Ethics"

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**Reading the Bible at Qumran, Alexandria, and Ephesus<sup>1</sup>**

by David A. deSilva\*

Many communities of faith embrace a rigid notion of the precise wording of Scripture, carefully delineate the boundaries of Scripture, and have a rather well-defined (if hidden to themselves) agenda as they come to Scripture to interpret and apply the Word. A particular translation of the Bible may be embraced, or at least preferred, as "Word of God," without ever considering the larger implications of dealing with the Word of God *in translation* as one's primary vehicle for engaging Scripture. The canon of Scripture is considered a divine given, without ever considering the ways in which texts now considered extra-canonical may have inspired and even functioned as Scripture for the authors of Scripture and the first generations of readers. The kinds of questions that are brought to Scripture are considered self-evident and appropriate, without ever considering how those questions are shaped and limited by the peculiar cultural and religious concerns that we bring to the text.

One of the ways in which we can move past such mental road blocks in our own engagement with Scripture is to consider how the books of the Bible functioned as Scripture in other communities of faith. A recent exhibit displayed at the John S. Knight Center in Akron, Ohio, brought together manuscripts of Biblical and para-biblical texts from Khirbet Qumran, from Egypt, and from centers of early Christianity. This visual display suggested the benefits of considering how three important communities of faith — the Jewish sect at Qumran, the Jewish community in Alexandria, and the early Christian movement (an important center of which was Ephesus) read and engaged their Scriptures.

It is highly informative for us to consider, first, what the "Bible" looked like for each community. This raises the question of the "text" of the Bible for particular communities of faith, producing a rather fluid picture that should help us begin to grasp the complexities of the history of the transmission of the text of the Bible — and help us release overly simplistic views of how the text took the shape in which we now read it. It is also illuminating to consider what books were being read as Scripture in each community. It may surprise us to learn that the greatest innovations in regard to canon were to be found in the early Christian church, as new outpourings of God's inspiration were being recognized as new texts were

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being produced and as slightly older texts were being read anew. Finally, we can begin to see how to recognize and examine our own interpretive agendas as we explore how was the Bible being interpreted, and what were people looking for as they read their Bible, in each community. In short, we will be looking at questions of "text," "canon," and "interpretation." I trust that a fourth question — "So what?" — will be fruitfully addressed throughout this study as well.

### **Reading the Bible at Qumran**

Visitors to Qumran today can view the ruins of what was the first known monastic community in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The location of the site was always known, but it only came to life when what is believed to have been the library of the community was discovered in eleven nearby caves. Those scrolls tell the story of a group of pious Jews, fed up with the religious leaders in the Jerusalem Temple, convinced that the Law of God was not being properly observed in their nation, who left the inhabited haunts of sinners and made a utopia in the desert where the covenant would be faithfully and perfectly kept — to their glory and to the salvation of Israel.<sup>2</sup>

The community's beginnings are traced back to 175-165 B.C.E, a tumultuous decade the story of which can be found in the first half of 2 Maccabees.<sup>3</sup> The high priests themselves were leading the way to apostasy from the covenant and adoption of Greek manners of life and government. Resistance to these high priests led to the violent suppression of Judaism in Jerusalem and its surrounding towns by order of Antiochus IV, the Greco-Syrian king that supported those high priests' reforms. Many people, including the first settlers at Qumran, sought refuge in the desert, both to avoid the apostasy and the persecution. Eventually, a successful resistance movement led by Judas Maccabaeus brought about an end to the persecution, the restoration of the Temple, and a new dynasty of high priests and kings. In response to this new dynasty of priests, the first of which is remembered as the "Wicked Priest" at Qumran, the mysterious "Teacher of Righteousness" forsook Jerusalem and came to the community and gave it its distinctive shape and order. It is likely that he was a member of the Zadokite priestly family, now denied his rightful office because Jonathan, a younger brother of Judas Maccabaeus, was the new incumbent.

The community continued long after his death, seeking "perfection of way" by fulfilling the Law of Moses as the Teacher of Righteousness had taught them, and looking for the glorious war of the sons of light against the sons of darkness, when God would defeat their enemies and establish them in a purified Temple. The end came in 68 C.E., though not as they expected: the "sons of darkness," the tenth



Roman Legion, killed every resident and destroyed the settlement. It is believed that the precious library of the sect — the books that the sect members discussed at every evening assembly and studied for one-third of every night — was hidden away just prior to the advance of the Roman armies into Judea, to put down the First Jewish Revolt.

In this library are three kinds of literature, grouped according to widening circles of readership. The group of texts written by members of the sect (some coming from the Teacher of Righteousness himself) has drawn the most attention, since these were previously unknown. In this group are the "Rules" for the community, laying out the policies and procedures for admitting people into the community, for ordering daily life in the community, for dealing with transgressions of community law and policy, as well as important insights into the history, purpose, and character of the community. Also in this group are psalms and prayers giving us windows into the worship life of the group, collections of laws and their interpretation that show us how the group thought the Law of Moses needed to be observed, commentaries on Scripture (which we will look at in more detail shortly), and apocalypses that testify to the group's expectation of the "end" and their role in that final battle and beyond.

A second group of texts contains books that were read not only by the people at Qumran but by other Jews as well, but which were not made part of the Hebrew Bible by the rabbinic leaders of the second century. These texts were known prior to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Here we would class fragments of *I Enoch*, an apocalypse that is also explicitly quoted in the Letter of Jude in the New Testament; Tobit, Ben Sira, and Letter of Jeremiah, books that would eventually become part of the Scripture of the early church; and books like *Jubilees* and the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, books that represent rewriting and substantial expansions of the biblical story and are a marvelous window into what interests Second Temple Period Jews brought to the Scriptures.

The third group of texts, by far the largest of the three groups, contains manuscripts of books of the Hebrew Bible, books read as Scripture by all (or at least most) Jews by the mid-first century C. E. Although not nearly so sensational, these are the most significant finds at Qumran as far as the shared Scriptures of Jews and Christians are concerned, giving us access to manuscripts or part of manuscripts of every book in the Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament that predate our formerly earliest manuscripts by five hundred to a thousand years.<sup>4</sup> Some of these texts were found in excellent condition, substantially complete in one large scroll. The majority of texts, however, had to be reconstructed from fragments, some so small that they contained no more than parts of two or three lines. This fact should give

us some sympathy and admiration for the work of the scholars who labored for decades reconstructing these texts for our benefit.

(1) What did the Bible look like at Qumran?

Jews from the late second century B.C.E. through the first century C.E. often spoke of their Scriptures as containing three kinds of literature. When Ben Sira's grandson translated his grandfather's wisdom into Greek in 132 B.C.E., he spoke of "the Law, the Prophecies, and the rest of the books." At the other end of the intertestamental period, we read in Luke's Gospel about Jesus referring to his fulfillment of everything written in "Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms" (Luke 24:45). Other references to "the Law and the Prophets" accord well with the primary importance of these two bodies of Scripture. It is in fact within the third part, now called the "Writings," but referred to vaguely as "the rest of the books" by Ben Sira's grandson and narrowly as "the Psalms" by Jesus in Luke's Gospel, that we find books whose status as Scripture need to be disputed and confirmed by rabbinic leaders in the late first/early second century C.E. — books like Esther, Ecclesiastes, but, in the end, not Baruch or Ben Sira.<sup>5</sup>

The Jews at Qumran appear to have read all the books that their fellow Jews read as Scripture, for at least partial manuscripts of every book except for Esther have been found in the caves, and the absence of Esther may be a chance occurrence. If number of manuscripts is any indication of the relative importance of each book, the Qumran community found the five books of Moses — the Torah (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) — the most important to have available for study by multiple readers. Deuteronomy led this pack with 31 different copies being found among the scrolls. The Psalms outstripped even Deuteronomy, with 39 copies being found, and Isaiah came in ahead of the rest of the books of the Hebrew Bible by a factor of 2 with 22 copies being found.<sup>6</sup> (To judge from the number of quotations and allusions to particular books of the Old Testament in the New Testament, early Christian leaders also found Psalms, Isaiah, and the Torah to be their most useful resources.)

But to say that the Qumran community was reading the Hebrew Bible is not to tell the whole story. One of the interesting discoveries about some of these books is that their contents vary from what we read in our Bibles. Jewish, Protestant, and Catholic Bibles all look to the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible as their basic text. "Masoretic Text" refers to a particular edition of the Hebrew Bible authorized by rabbinic leaders and executed by scribes in the fifth and sixth centuries C.E. The principal witness to this edition is a codex (a bound book) called Codex Leningradensis, written in 1009 C.E.<sup>7</sup> The Scrolls give us access to

the Hebrew Bible before that process of editing took place, and shows us a somewhat more fluid picture. The most striking examples are Jeremiah and Samuel, which were read at Qumran in both the version in which we basically read them and in a slightly shorter form (in the case of Jeremiah) and a slightly longer form (in the case of 1 Samuel). The Psalms Scroll, moreover, contains about a dozen additional psalms and prayers not found in our book of Psalms. In this case, while the additional psalms could be an indication that the collection of Psalms was still somewhat fluid, they could also be an indication that these scrolls represent the "hymnal" used in the worship life of the community, and do not purport to represent the canonical collection of Psalms.<sup>8</sup>

## (2) What books were being read as Scripture at Qumran?

The mere fact that the books of the Hebrew Bible were found at Qumran does not automatically tell us that all these books — and only these books — were regarded as Scripture by that community. Their status is confirmed by other criteria: these are the books cited as carrying final authority ("as it is written"); these are the books that became the basis for commentary or midrash, thus showing their foundational importance for the community; sometimes, the care used in the production of the manuscript (the kind of script or the kinds of medium used, for example, finely prepared vellum as opposed to coarser or less durable substances) bears secondary witness to the status of the text.

But as we consider the role or authority that texts have in the community, several other books rise to prominence as potential additions to the "canon" at Qumran. We have already encountered the "Community Rule," which exercised rigid control over the life of the sect members daily. Though never considered "Scripture," it had a force more binding than Scripture, and its force was felt consistently throughout one's time with the sect from initiation to death. Beyond this, we should find *Jubilees*, an expansive retelling of Genesis 1 through Exodus 14, and *1 Enoch*, a collection of apocalypses written during the second and first centuries B.C.E. *Jubilees*, in particular, is cited in *Damascus Document* XVI 4-5 as an authoritative resource in support of the sect's observance of a solar calendar of 364 days rather than a lunar calendar of 354 days (with an extra month introduced even three years).<sup>9</sup> Their commitment to a solar calendar meant that the residents of Qumran did not celebrate sabbaths or the cycle of festivals on the same days as every other Jew, with the result that they regarded the latter as gross violators. The ultimate source for this calendar is the "Astronomical Book" nestled within *1 Enoch* (chapters 72-82). Even though *1 Enoch* is not explicitly cited as an authority for this calendar, the fact that twenty copies of the book have been recovered from the



caves attests to its importance to the sect.<sup>10</sup> Even here, though, all we can say securely is that these two books were considered "authoritative," not "Scripture."

(3) How was the Bible being interpreted, and what were the Qumran sectarians looking for as they read their Bible?

First and foremost, the Jews at Qumran were interested in learning how to fulfill the Torah, the Law of Moses, perfectly. The psalm that closes the "Community Rule" is filled with phrases like "walking in perfection of way," "establishing one's steps," receiving "knowledge" of God's ways, attaining "justification" through the right doing of the Law. Indeed, the "mission statement" of the community is telling: "they shall go into the desert to prepare His way, as it is written: 'Prepare the way of the Lord in the desert; make a straight path for our God in the wilderness' [quoting Isaiah 40:3, familiar to us from its use in the Christian church]. The path is the study of the Law that God commanded through Moses" (1QS VIII.14-17).

But the community's most distinctive mode of interpretation is found in its treatment of the prophetic literature, a treatment which they extended to the Psalms as well (as would the early church). The community turned to this literature to find its own story, and the story of its leader, the "Teacher of Righteousness," written therein. This is already seen in its application of Isaiah 40:3 to itself — the community is the group that prepares for God a highway in the desert. By reading its own story (past, present, and future) in the Scriptures, the community could affirm that they were in fact the focal point of God's redemptive activity in the world.

The community developed a special form of literature, called *pesharim*, or "commentaries," to develop this kind of reading. A portion of Scripture would be quoted, followed by the words "its interpretation is (*peshro*), then some connection is made with the story of the group or its leader. For example, consider the following lines from the *Commentary on Habakkuk*:

"The righteous shall live by faith." Interpreted, this concerns all those who observe the Law, whom God will deliver because of their faith in the Teacher of Righteousness.

"Because of the blood of men and the violence done to the land, to the city, and to all its inhabitants." Interpreted, this concerns the Wicked Priest [this is the archenemy of the Teacher of Righteousness, probably Jonathan the high priest, younger



brother of Judas Maccabaeus] whom God delivered into the hands of his enemies because of the iniquity committed against the Teacher of Righteousness.<sup>11</sup>

The interpretative key to the Scriptures was found in (1) the way the sect fulfilled the Law of God and (2) the story of the sect's leader, his trials and successes, and the ongoing story of the sect he founded — all the way to its final victory in God's future interventions in history. If this sounds familiar, it should.

(4) So what?

First, the Qumran community's Bible has given new life to scholarly reconstruction of the text of the Old Testament, the discipline called textual criticism. These manuscripts, taking us back to the turn of the era, have confirmed the accuracy of the Masoretic text again and again. But they have also given us cause to emend the text of the Old Testament. For example, when one compares 1 Samuel 10:27-11:1 in the RSV with the NRSV, one finds an additional paragraph:

But some worthless fellows said, "How can Saul save us?" And they despised him, and brought him no present. But he held his peace. Then Nahash the Ammonite went up and besieged Jabesh-gilead.... (1 Sam 10:27-11:1 RSV)

But some worthless fellows said, "How can Saul save us?" They despised him and brought him no present. But he held his peace. *Now Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had been grievously oppressing the Gadites and the Reubenites. He would gouge out the right eye of each of them and would not grant Israel a deliverer. No one was left of the Israelites across the Jordan whose right eye Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had not gouged out. But there were seven thousand men who had escaped from the Ammonites and had entered Jabesh-gilead. About a month later, Nahash the Ammonite went up and besieged Jabesh-gilead....* (1 Sam 10:27-11:1 NRSV)

This change is based on a determination made by textual critics that the version of 1 Samuel found at Qumran was actually the correct one.<sup>12</sup> The omission of the paragraph can be explained as an accidental oversight (as a scribe jumped from one line that began with the same string of characters to another line somewhat further

down the page beginning with the same string of characters) at some point in the history of copying 1 Samuel.

A more significant example comes from Jeremiah 10:2-10. English Bibles, following the Masoretic Text, read:

Thus says the LORD: Do not learn the way of the nations, or be dismayed at the signs of the heavens; for the nations are dismayed at them. (3) For the customs of the peoples are false: a tree from the forest is cut down, and worked with an ax by the hands of an artisan; (4) people deck it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so that it cannot move. (5) Their idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber field, and they cannot speak; they have to be carried, for they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, nor is it in them to do good. (6) *There is none like you, O LORD; you are great, and your name is great in might.* (7) *Who would not fear you, O King of the nations? For that is your due; among all the wise ones of the nations and in all their kingdoms there is no one like you.* (8) *They are both stupid and foolish; the instruction given by idols is no better than wood!* (9) Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz. They are the work of the artisan and of the hands of the goldsmith; their clothing is blue and purple; they are all the product of skilled workers. (10) *But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King. At his wrath the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure his indignation.*

A manuscript of Jeremiah at Qumran, however, provides a much shorter version of this passage, with verse nine in a different place:

Thus says the LORD: Do not learn the way of the nations, or be dismayed at the signs of the heavens; for the nations are dismayed at them. (3) For the customs of the peoples are false: a tree from the forest is cut down, and worked with an ax by the hands of an artisan; (4) people deck it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so that it cannot move. (9) Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz. They are the work of the artisan and of the hands of the

goldsmith; their clothing is blue and purple; they are all the product of skilled workers. (5) Their idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber field, and they cannot speak; they have to be carried, for they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, nor is it in them to do good.

Prior to the discovery of this manuscript, the Greek version of Jeremiah was the only witness to the shorter text, and so the longer text was preferred.<sup>13</sup> Now both a turn-of-the-era Hebrew manuscript and the early Greek translation of Jeremiah attest to this reading, which so eminent a scholar as Emanuel Tov believes to be the original reading.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, it is easy to see how a scribe would have been moved to expand the passage by interspersing the praises of the One, True God as a contrast to these foolish no-gods worshiped by other nations. I would not be surprised to see future English translations of the Bible taking account of this in some way as well.

Second, the distinctive way the prophets and psalms were read at Qumran provides an illuminating background for the early church's interpretation of the same, now applied to a different Teacher of Righteousness and the ongoing story of a different sect within Judaism — one that would not be cut short by the Roman suppression of the Jewish Revolt.

Third, the way the Bible was read at Qumran illustrates both the diversity within early Judaism — a Judaism in which there were numerous ways of thinking about Scripture and about the covenant — and bears witness to the central points of unity: an interest in fulfilling Torah correctly; an interest in falling in line with the rhythms of God by correct observance of the Sabbath and the festivals that remembered God's acts on behalf of Israel; and essential agreement on the core tradition (the Law, the Prophets, and at least several of the Writings).

### **Reading the Bible in Alexandria**

The Dead Sea Scrolls have been rightly called the most significant discovery of the twentieth century, giving us direct access to the state of the Hebrew Bible at the turn of the era and more direct access to this peculiar sect than to any other Jewish group in the first century C.E. But *far* more significant for the study of early Judaism and early Christianity are the fragments of the Greek Bible, commonly referred to as the Septuagint. The Septuagint was never "lost,"<sup>15</sup> and so there was no sensational "discovery" to compare with finding the Dead Sea Scrolls, something the media could use to bring the texts to popular attention. As a result, those who have heard about the discovery of Dead Sea Scrolls through the media find that the more important personal "discovery" of the Septuagint yet awaits them.

(1) What did the Bible look like in Alexandria?

The Hebrew Bible takes on a surprising shape in Alexandria in the three centuries before the turn of the era: it shows up in Greek instead of Hebrew. Jews had lived in Egypt since the sixth century B.C.E.; many more had swelled the Jewish communities in Egypt's cities by the third century B.C.E. Unable to keep their native language alive in a foreign land, many Jews in Alexandria were much more fluent in Greek than Hebrew and Aramaic. As a result, they needed access to their Scriptures in their new language. The Torah was translated into Greek by about 250 B.C.E. The Prophets and more important Writings (like Psalms and Proverbs) were translated by the early second century B.C.E. At the same time, other books written in Hebrew were being made available in Greek (for example, the Wisdom of Ben Sira, translated into Greek by his grandson). The Jews in Egypt — and soon thereafter the Jews in Asia Minor, Syria, Greece, and Italy — found themselves in a position not unlike most Jews and Christians in America. A translation of Scripture became their only Scripture.

Now, there were some problems with these translations. The Torah had been translated rather tightly, but not exactly. Moreover, the Prophets and Writings could show significant degrees of looseness in translation. The grandson of Yeshua Ben Sira, apologizing for the defects in his own translation of Ben Sira's book into Greek, observes concerning the Greek Bible that "what was originally expressed in Hebrew does not exactly have the same sense when translated into another language.... Even the Law itself, the Prophecies, and the rest of the books differ not a little when read in the original" (prologue to Ben Sira).

These differences made the users somewhat uneasy, with the result that legends grew up around the translation of the Torah into Greek attempting to legitimate the new translation as authoritative Scripture. The *Letter of Aristeas* claims that the translation had been undertaken by seventy of the most intelligent and careful Judean scribes, sent to Alexandria by the high priest Eleazar with authorized copies of the Hebrew Torah. (It is from this legend of seventy translators that the *Septuagint*, from the Greek word for seventy, gets its name.) There they demonstrated their impeccable wisdom in a seven-day banquet with the king, and then produced a translation that, when read to the population of Alexandrian Jews, was acclaimed by them as "in every respect accurate," with a curse being pronounced on anyone who changed the new text either on purpose or by accident (*Ep. Aristeas* 310-311).<sup>16</sup> Philo's version is even more extravagant: each of the seventy translators worked independently and, when their results were compared, were all found to have produced exactly the same translation, acclaimed



by Philo as a miracle of prophetic inspiration (*Life of Moses* 2.37-40)! The legends, however, did not erase the notable differences in wording, which would also lead rabbinic leaders and scribes in the early second century C.E. to initiate several revisions designed to bring the Greek Bible in use among Jews in the Western Diaspora closer in line with the Hebrew text used in Palestine.

What was the impact of translating the Hebrew Bible into Greek on the way in which the Bible was read? The simple act of finding Greek equivalents to the great Hebrew words like *zedek* (righteousness), *emeth* (reliability), and *hesed* (covenant loyalty) was already significant in several ways. When these words became *dikaosune* (justice), *pistis* (faith/belief/faithfulness), and *eleos* (mercy, compassion), they were put into conversation not only with Jewish conversations about "righteousness" (*zedek*) but with the larger conversations happening among Greek and Roman philosophers and ethicists about "justice" (*dikaosune*) as well. Suddenly, the Hebrew Bible resonated with the thought world of Greco-Roman ethics and philosophy, and dynamic interactions occurred as Hellenistic Jews begin to interpret their Scriptures as bringing something important to the Greco-Roman conversation — and begin to listen to Greco-Roman philosophers for insights into their own Scriptures.

Something else happens, though, when *hesed* (covenant loyalty), for example, is translated as *eleos* (mercy, compassion). The nuances of these two words are not the same. The Hebrew word is loaded with the sense of reciprocal obligation, and because of its common usage will often be heard in the sense of reciprocal obligations as defined by the Law of Moses — whether obligations Jews have toward each other or obligations between the Jewish people and God. The Greek word, however, lacks this particular set of cultural associations, pointing merely to acts of kindness and charity toward people in need. If this is too subtle, consider a famous passage in which God says:

"I desire  $\delta\varsigma, \chi,$  (*hesed*), and not sacrifice" (Hosea 6:6)

"I desire  $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$  (*eleos*), and not sacrifice" (Hosea 6:6)

In the Hebrew text tradition, God is calling for loyalty to the covenant and to the obligations it places on the various parties. Fulfilling our obligations toward one another is better than trying to make up for failure or neglect with sacrifices. These obligations include not just loving our neighbor, but observing the Sabbath, avoiding certain foods, maintaining ritual purity, and other ways by which Jews distinguished themselves from non-Jews as God's people. In the Greek text tradition, however, God might be seen calling simply for ethical action, and specifically acts of charity and kindness toward those in need, as preferable to offering sacrifices in the Temple, elevating ethical action above ritual practice. This

new emphasis is certainly reflected in Alexandrian Jewish Bible interpretation, and is the sort of difference that would certainly play into early Christian readings of Scripture as they sought to universalize the application of God's Law to a community where the distinction between Jew and Gentile no longer held value.

Some differences are the result of a new social and cultural location, and of the translator's attempt to make meaningful and culturally sensitive translational decisions. For example, the image of God as a "Rock" is a wonderful way to express God's reliability, or the strength God gives the worshiper, or the way God gives the worshiper something hard and real to hold onto. But when you move from Israel to Alexandria, you find yourself surrounded by rocks — carved stone images of many gods, whom their worshipers pronounce "blessed," and from whom these worshipers seek safety, protection, and the like. So "Blessed be my Rock" becomes "Blessed be my God" (Ps 18:46) to avoid making any connection with the worship of rocks and stones happening everywhere around the Jewish community.<sup>17</sup>

These are all very subtle differences, however. The Septuagint is full of far less subtle variations from the Hebrew text as well, which we will explore briefly a little later. Consider one for now, from Amos 9:11-12.

"On that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen, and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old; in order that they may possess the remnants of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name" (NRSV, based on Masoretic Text).

"On that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen, and repair its fallen parts, and raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as the days of the age, in order that the rest of humankind and all the nations, over whom my name is invoked, may seek it out" (NRSV adapted to Septuagint Text).

The restoration of Israel has two entirely different purposes: in the Hebrew Text, God restores Israel to position her for domination over her neighbors; in the Greek text, God restores Israel to draw all humankind to her, probably in keeping with the hope of Isaiah and the Psalms that all nations would come to seek and worship the One God as a result of Israel's restoration. We do not always know how to account for these differences. In some cases, the differences will result from the Greek translator working from a Hebrew text different from the Masoretic text; in other cases, the differences will result from the translator's own deliberate changes to the

text; in other cases, the differences are an accident of the transmission process after the translation was produced (e.g., through intentional or unintentional changes introduced by copyists). And, of course, some combination of these factors may come into play in any single instance.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, with all these new nuances and different readings, *this* became the Bible of Greek-speaking Jews throughout the Eastern Mediterranean and was even used in Israel, which remained part of the Greek and the Hellenized Roman world. This is not so difficult to understand when one considers how many Greek-speaking Jews came to Jerusalem for the religious festivals, and even returned to live in their native land (without, however, leaving behind Greek as their primary language). Remarkably, fragments of Greek Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy were even found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, a testimony to how far the Greek Bible penetrated the homeland of Israel.

## (2) What books were being read as Scripture?

The major witnesses to the Septuagint are bound volumes, called codices, copied by Christians in the fourth and fifth centuries. Examining the Old Testament in these volumes, you would find them to contain not only the books of the Hebrew Bible, but also the books of the Apocrypha. This raised the question whether or not Alexandrian Jews had already adopted a wider canon than their fellow Jews in Palestine, reading the Apocrypha as part of their Scriptures.

This theory, which still shows up in the writings particularly of Greek Orthodox authors, has been thoroughly and properly debunked.<sup>19</sup> If it were the case that Jews in Alexandria read books like Wisdom of Solomon, Tobit, or Judith as *Scripture*, we should expect to find their status reflected somehow in the writings of these Jews. But we do not. Philo of Alexandria, who flourished in the first half of the first century C.E., left us an enormous collection of his writings. Nowhere does he refer to a book from the Apocrypha, let alone cite one as Scripture. Instead, his focus is wholly on the Pentateuch (Genesis through Deuteronomy) and its interpretation, introducing quotations from the prophets and the writings as he finds them helpful.

If we turn to a book called *4 Maccabees*, sometimes located in Alexandria but much better located nearer to Syrian Antioch,<sup>20</sup> another large center of Diaspora Judaism, we find a similar picture of "canon." In this book, the focus remains on the Torah and its interpretation as the path to grow into every virtue. The stories in the Pentateuch, the writings of the Prophets, Proverbs, Psalms, and Daniel are all presented as resources for discerning the path to right living and finding the necessary encouragement to take that path (see especially 4 Macc 1:31-3:18; 16:16-



23; 18:10-19). This is not to say that Jews in Alexandria or Antioch were *only* reading Scripture. Far from it. Philo also quotes Greek drama and philosophy, showing points of connection with what he finds in the Law of Moses. The author of *4 Maccabees* has read *2 Maccabees*, a book the author considers sufficiently edifying to make its stories of the Jewish martyrs under Antiochus IV the basis for his sermon on the benefits of keeping the Law of Moses. They are taking the work of their fellow Jews and even of Gentile authors seriously, being informed by them, but the picture of the "Bible" takes us still to the Torah, Prophets, and Writings.

(3) How was the Bible being interpreted, and what were the interests of Jews coming to the Bible, in Alexandria?

If the Qumran community came to their Hebrew Bible with a desire to work out the minutiae of keeping Torah perfectly and to discover the role of their sect in the unfolding drama of God's plan for the world, the Jews at Alexandria came to their Greek Bible with a desire to discover the moral and ethical truths hidden in the Law of Moses and, to a lesser extent, the prophets and writings. These readers were interested in discovering how their God had provided reliable answers — indeed, superior answers — to the questions that drove the ethical conversations of the Greek ethicists around them: What is "justice" in every human and divine relationship? What is true "freedom," and what is the true state of "slavery"? How do we rise above the power of "desire" or our "cravings" so as to live a life of virtue? Recall that translating the Bible into Greek had also helped move the Scriptural revelation more directly into those conversations, suggesting that it had something to contribute. And, of course, if Jews in Alexandria were to remain faithful to their Jewish way of life, they needed to be sure that their way of life gave them the same if not greater access to achieving a noble and praiseworthy way of life as Greco-Roman philosophy did for their neighbors.

So in Alexandria and other centers of the Jewish Diaspora we find a moral and allegorical interpretation being applied to Scripture, to discover the practical implications of the text for cultivating a virtuous life and liberating one from the power of vice. Jews were in fact criticized by their neighbors for having barbaric laws — laws that kept them from enjoying all the good things of nature, like pork and lobster, and laws that kept them from acting justly and showing solidarity with their fellow non-Jewish Alexandrians. Against such criticisms, Jews found that, on the contrary, they had a marvelous and divine Law, in which was hidden much wisdom for those who had eyes to see.

These same dietary laws, far from being superstitious and barbaric, were given by God to exercise the Jewish people in the virtue of self control. According



to Philo, Moses, the wise lawgiver, sought to eliminate from the diet of the Jews all those foods that were the most succulent or delicate, like pork and lobster, teaching them to use food to serve their bodily needs rather than satisfy their tastes. This would, in turn, make it easier for them to do the same in other arenas of life, so that they could moderate their desires and seek what was sufficient, rather than become slaves to pleasure (*On the special laws* 4.100-102). The laws also revealed hidden wisdom, for those with eyes to read correctly. Moses defined "clean" animals as those who have cloven hooves and ruminate. This was to teach that the people of God, who are also "clean" and feed only on "clean" animals, were to distinguish carefully between right and wrong (the fork of the hoof), and to set their foot only on the path of virtue. It was also to teach them to continually mull over the God's teachings until their lessons, little by little, are fully digested and imprinted upon the soul (*On the special laws* 4.105-108). Similarly, in the *Letter of Aristeas*, we find that in being commanded to avoid eating the meat of carrion birds, the Jews are taught to avoid preying on the weak, the sick, and the dying like those birds do.

Circumcision, mocked by Greeks as a barbaric mutilation of the human form, represented the cutting away of excess pleasure and excess desire, inscribing on the Jewish male his commitment to tame the passions and live a temperate and just life. Reading Philo, *4 Maccabees*, and the *Letter of Aristeas*, one finds that other stipulations of the Jewish Law trained a Jew in generosity, courage, just dealings with other people, and helped the Jew rise above anger, greed, lust, and the like. It is important to remember that the allegorical and moral reading in no way rendered the literal keeping of the commandments superfluous. Rather, it gave a deeper meaning to the fulfilling of the whole Law. The stories of the Bible were also read as moral examples. Binding all these readings together was a conviction that the Scriptures were a testimony to God's faithfulness to God's special people, and a summons to faithfulness toward God in return.

#### (4) So what?

Our brief tour of the text, canon, and interpretation of the Bible in Alexandria alerts us to how translation alters the essence of the Bible. It opens up new possibilities for interpretation, and stimulates conversation between the Scripture and the cultural world of the new language — but it also eliminates meanings and changes how we will encounter the text. This is particularly important for us to keep in mind, who may read the Bible only in a translation like English.

The translation of the Scriptures into Greek, and the particular mode of interpretation at Alexandria, both pave the way for the spread of the worship of the

One God to all people, now including those Gentiles who, knowing Greek, can read the Jewish Bible and, knowing that there are ways of reading the Jewish Law beyond their literal fulfillment, can adopt these as the Word of the God of the Universe to them — no longer ignoring them as the irrelevant words of a local, tribal God to the Jews only. The “so what” question here leads directly into the final phase of this tour, the Bible in the early church.

### **Reading the Bible in Ephesus (and other centers of the early church)**

(1) What Bible were early Christians reading in Ephesus (and beyond)?

Every standard English Bible from the KJV to the NRSV uses the Hebrew Masoretic Text as the basis for its Old Testament. This is also the text type underlying the Jewish Bible, whether printed in Hebrew or translated into English. This phenomenon would lead us to expect that the early Christians -- especially those leaders who wrote the books that would become the New Testament -- looked to the Masoretic Text (or at least one of its Hebrew ancestors) for its Old Testament as well. But readers of the New Testament frequently notice that a quotation of the Jewish Scriptures in the New Testament -- a verse from Isaiah, or the Psalms, or Amos in the Gospel of Matthew or Book of Acts -- does not match the translation of the same verse when it is compared with the wording in Isaiah, or Psalms, or Amos as it appears in the Old Testament/Jewish Bible.

We can account for this in one of three ways. The New Testament author may be quoting from memory, perhaps not overly concerned about recovering the precise wording, perhaps even shaping the quotation in a way that will better support his point. A second possibility is that the New Testament author is quoting the Scripture verbatim, but from a Hebrew text that differs from the Masoretic Text. A third possibility is that the New Testament author is quoting from the Greek Old Testament -- the Septuagint -- rather than from a Hebrew text, and the Septuagint often departs from the Masoretic Text, and thus from our printed Old Testament, in significant ways.

If we look just at the writings of Paul, we find that of almost 100 citations of Old Testament passages, the wording in Paul, the Masoretic Text, and the Septuagint agree in about 40 cases; Paul agrees with the Masoretic Text but not the Septuagint in about 7 cases; Paul agrees with the Septuagint against the Masoretic Text in about 16 cases; and Paul does his own thing agreeing with neither the Masoretic Text nor the Septuagint in 31 cases.<sup>21</sup> The upshot of this is that Paul follows the LXX more often than he follows the MT, and this trend will increase as one moves to books like Hebrews, 1 Peter, and into the second century Apostolic

Fathers.<sup>22</sup> The early Christians, most of whom claimed Greek as their first language (whether Jews or Gentiles by birth), and their leaders (whether Jews born in Judea like James, Jews born in the Diaspora like Paul, or Gentile-born authors like Luke) adopted the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible as their Scripture, with all its variations from the Hebrew Text. (This continues, by the way, in the Greek Orthodox churches to the present day.)

Why was this significant for the early church's engagement with the Bible? Recall how we compared Hosea 6:6 in the Hebrew Bible against the Greek Old Testament:

"I desire *ds, x*, (*hesed*, covenant loyalty), and not sacrifice" (Hosea 6:6)

"I desire *ἔλεος* (*eleos*, mercy/compassion), and not sacrifice" (Hosea 6:6)

The Greek version of Hosea emphasizes God's desire for acts of human kindness rather than loyalty to a covenant that includes not only humane concern but also dietary restrictions, sabbath observance, and circumcision, which would all have been heard as part of *hesed*. Reading Hosea in Greek rather than in Hebrew helped support the early church's focus on living out the command to "love one's neighbor as oneself" or to "love one another" as the way in which to please God and fulfill the essence of God's Law — specifically over against circumcision, dietary laws, and observance of the Jewish liturgical calendar.

We may also recall also the difference between the Hebrew text of Amos 9:11 and the Septuagint version:

On that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen, and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old; in order that they may possess the remnants of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name (NRSV, based on Masoretic Text).

On that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen, and repair its fallen parts, and raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as the days of the age, in order that the rest of humankind and all the nations, over whom my name is invoked, may seek it out (NRSV adapted to Septuagint Text).

The author of Acts quotes the Septuagint version at a focal point in the narrative, namely the Jerusalem Council at which James, Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and the rest of the church leaders decided that Gentiles could join the church on the basis of trusting Jesus, being baptized, and receiving the Holy Spirit — without the

requirement to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses. The Greek version of Amos 9:11 helps legitimate the direction that the early church is taking, as it moves from a Jewish Christian movement growing in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria (the means by which the "booth of David" is restored) to a movement that is drawing in Gentiles in large numbers (the "rest of the nations" seeking out God via the restored tent of David).<sup>23</sup> The Hebrew text, which speaks of the restoration of the house of David for the purpose of political conquest, does not lend itself to such a reading.

As one more example of how the Septuagint provided early Christians with opportunities that the Hebrew text did not, we can consider the Letter to the Hebrews, 10:4-10. As the climax of an essay exploring how Jesus has offered the supremely effective sacrifice that cleanses human beings from sin and consecrates them to enter into the very presence of God, the author quotes Psalm 40:6-8. In the Masoretic text, this reads:

Sacrifice and offering you do not desire, but you have given me an open ear (literally, "ears you have dug for me"). Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. Then I said, "Here I am; in the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart." (Ps 40:6-8, after the MT)

Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you have prepared for me; you did not ask for whole-burnt offerings or sin offerings. Then I said, "Behold, I am here; in the scroll of the book it is written about me: I desired to do your will, O my God, according to your law in the midst of my belly." (Ps 40:6-8, after the LXX)

Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, "See, God, I have come to do your will, O God (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)." (Ps 40:6-8, as quoted in Hebrews 10:5-7)

The author of Hebrews has drawn on the Septuagint text, and the critical difference is seen in the fact that the Greek translator abandoned the homely image of God digging out our ears so that we could hear the Law to do it, replacing it with the image of God preparing for the psalmist a "body." Clearly, the Septuagint translator



intended the same meaning as the original Hebrew — God wants us to live out the Torah by hearing and obeying ("ears you have dug out for me," as in the Hebrew text) or by embodying the law ("a body you have prepared for you," as in the Septuagint text). But the Septuagint translator opened up for the author of Hebrews a different reading when the latter applied the Psalm to Jesus: God prepared for *Jesus* a body that could be offered up as a superior sacrifice to those burnt offerings and sacrifices that the psalm says God rejected.<sup>24</sup> Psalm 40 becomes, in his hands, an Old Testament warrant for one particular human sacrifice quite different from any sacrifice prescribed by the Law of Moses.<sup>25</sup>

(2) What books were being read as Scripture in the early church?

The early Christians were reading the books of the Hebrew Bible — although mostly in a Greek translation — as their Scriptures. As at Qumran, Psalms, Isaiah, and the five books of the Law were the most frequently used and quoted. But it is also clear that the authors of the New Testament were deriving their inspiration from other sources as well, books that would not be included in the Hebrew Bible.

The Wisdom of Ben Sira, the collected sayings of a sage who taught in Jerusalem 200 years before Jesus began his public ministry, was so influential in Judea that it left its mark on scores of passages in rabbinic texts. It is clear that it left its stamp on the teaching of Jesus and the early church as well.<sup>26</sup> Both Yeshua Ben Sira and Yeshua Ben Joseph urge giving to the one who asks (Sir 4:4; cf. Mt 5:42) and claim that mirroring God's generosity makes one like "a child of the Most High" (Sir 4:10; cf. Mt 5:45). Both warn against "vain repetition" in prayer (Sir 7:14; cf. Mt 6:7); both address God as "Father" in prayer (Sir 23:1, 4; cf. Mt 6:9; Jas 3:9). One development in Ben Sira is especially arresting. The words "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us" are familiar enough from Jesus' prayer. But Ben Sira had already taught that those who hope for forgiveness from God must not harbor unforgiveness against mortals like themselves.

Forgive your neighbor the wrong he has done,  
and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray.  
Does a man harbor anger against another,  
and yet seek for healing from the Lord?  
Does he have no mercy toward a man like himself,  
and yet pray for his own sins? (Sir 28:2-4)

Those with no knowledge of Ben Sira think Jesus was the first to teach people that

"unless you forgive people their sins against you, neither will my Father in heaven forgive your sins" (Matt 6:14-15). But Jesus was incorporating far more of the wisdom of the Judaism of his day, and thus speaking more within than against Judaism, than people who stop reading his Jewish resources at Malachi realize.

But early Christian leaders did not look to these texts only for moral instruction. They also built their doctrines upon them as well. For example, the author of the Letter to the Hebrews read the depiction of the figure of "Lady Wisdom" in Wisdom of Solomon and found there a resource that could spur on the church's reflection about the relationship of Jesus, the Son, to God, and provide revelation about the Son's activity prior to the incarnation:

*Wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me.... [Wisdom] is a breath of the power of God, and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty.... She is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of God's goodness.... She is an initiate in the knowledge of God and an associate in God's works. (Wisd 7:22, 25-26; 8:4)*

In these last days, God has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, *through whom he also created the world, who reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of God's nature*, upholding the universe by his word of power. (Heb 1:2-3)

The relationship of Wisdom to God as effulgence to light source or image to reality becomes an indication of the Son's relationship to the Father, and Wisdom's role in Creation is now taken over by the Son.<sup>27</sup>

The New Testament authors never introduce the material learned from these books as Scripture (i.e., with words like "as it is written" or "as the Spirit says"), and indeed never explicitly draw attention to the fact that they are quoting this material from another book. However, the next generation of Christian leaders (Clement of Rome, the authors of the Didache and the Letter of Barnabas) recognized the influence of the Apocryphal books on the letters of Paul, James, Hebrews, and so on, and began to quote them as Scripture. Their logic appears to have been, if Paul and his apostolic colleagues found these books worthy of use and reflection, and derived important doctrines from them, they must be divinely inspired as well and worthy of our use as Scripture. This position would be challenged from time to time, but it became the majority opinion in Christendom

and remains so to this day in Catholic and Orthodox churches. Protestants should also remember that the official position of the Reformers was that the Apocryphal books were worthy to be read for instruction in piety and in ethics, and for that reason Luther's German Bible and even the first edition of the KJV (which you can see on exhibit here) retained the Apocrypha.<sup>28</sup>

And, of course, the early church was beginning to collect another body of texts to read alongside the Jewish Scriptures and these other useful, inspiring texts. It is appropriate to mention Colossians here, since Col 4:16 provides the first evidence that Paul intended for his writings to be shared by the recipients with a broader audience, instruction the Colossian Christians to share his letter to them with the church in neighboring Laodicea, and also to read themselves the letter Paul sent to the Laodiceans. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, closely related to Colossians in content and wording, was probably written by Paul as a circular letter to a number of churches in Western Asia Minor. It is a short step from here to the statement in 2 Peter, perhaps a single generation later, referring to widespread reading of a collection of Paul's letters in the churches (2 Pet 3:15-16) that would be familiar to his readers and also available for other communities of faith to misread. Paul's letters, letters from other apostolic voices, and Gospels would all shortly become a second body of texts read as Scripture.

(3) How was the Bible being interpreted in the early church, and to address what interests?

The early church resembled the community at Qumran in several respects in regard to reading and engaging Scripture. First, it shared with Qumran the conviction that a single, authoritative Teacher brought the decisive word about how God's Law was to be fulfilled, reading all of God's Law through the lens of that Teacher's instruction, and reading that Teacher's instruction with all the authority of God's Law. Second, it shared with Qumran the conviction that their leader and their group stood at the apex of God's redemptive history, and at the center of God's end-time interventions on behalf of the faithful. Thus, the prophetic elements of Scripture (which included not only the Prophets but also the Psalms in both groups) *really* spoke about the life and times of the group's leader and about the ongoing story of the community formed by that leader. Thus in the early church we find a Christ-centered interpretation of the prophets and psalms, sometimes reading the texts as speaking *about* Jesus, sometimes reading them as addressed *to* Jesus, sometimes even seeking out their meaning by placing them on the lips *of* Jesus. Like the Qumran group, they are particularly interested in explaining the opposition encountered by their leader and ongoingly by the group by finding this opposition



prophesied in Scripture. The Teacher's rejection and the group's marginalization was all part of God's plan from the beginning, and so should not be disconcerting and disconfirming.

But the early church went considerably further than the Qumran sect in this regard. The death of their leader, Jesus, was pregnant with meaning and with new life for the members of the sect, and so a particular interest arose in determining from the Old Testament what that meaning was. Ransom, redemption, bearing the sins of many — all these meanings applied to the cross were anchored in readings of the Old Testament. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all" (Isaiah 53). They also sought out the "full story" of Jesus — the parts they could not see like his pre-incarnate life with the Father, his ascension, his taking a seat at God's right hand, his heavenly priesthood — in the Old Testament. "The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet'" (Psalm 110:1). "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110:4). And we have already seen in Amos 9:11 an example of how the Scriptures were mined to interpret what was happening in the early church a decade or two after Jesus' crucifixion.

On the other hand, the church learned from Hellenistic Jewish interpretation of the Scriptures — never forgetting that it also basically inherited *those* Greek versions of the Scriptures — the keen interest in the moral and ethical interpretation of the Law of Moses. But again, the early church went beyond what Alexandrian Jews like Philo would do: keeping the moral essence of the Law, they abandoned the practice of the Law in many of its particular requirements like observance of the Sabbath, circumcision, and distinguishing between clean and unclean foods. This was in keeping with its decision that Gentiles would be accepted on the basis of faith and the reception of the Holy Spirit, and its decision that there would be one church of Jews and Gentiles regulated by the teachings of Jesus, the apostles, and the Spirit — not by the Law of Moses. The only major distinguishing mark that remained of a non-ethical nature was a complete abhorrence of idolatry, which would continue to differentiate Christians from their neighbors (whereas Jews also had circumcision, Sabbath, and food laws to differentiate themselves from their neighbors).

#### (4) So what?

What can we take away from this tour of how communities of faith engaged their Scriptures, so as to enrich our own — and simply grow more aware of the complexities that we tend to assume do not exist?



First, every time we translate a text from one language to another, we change the range of meanings available in a text. This is crystal clear when we look at the Septuagint side by side with the Hebrew Bible. But if it's clear to us as we gaze into the past, let it be clear to us also as we engage the present. Almost all of us will only read the Bible in translation, in English rather than the original Hebrew and Aramaic for the Old Testament and Greek for the New Testament. To paraphrase Ben Sira's grandson once again, what was originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek does not have exactly the same meaning when translated into English. In some cases, the very act of bringing the words into English makes them resonate with our cultural and social realities (like the Septuagint did for the Hebrew Bible, bringing it into close dialogue with Greco-Roman philosophy and ethics), while also forfeiting their capacity to take us back into the cultural and social world in which the Bible originated. An awareness of this could lead us to read more about that cultural and social world, and work at hearing the Bible more in terms of how it resonated with its native world. This can both provide a check on, and enrich, the way we engage the Bible in our context, and provides a first remedy for approaching the Bible in an overly-literalistic manner.

Second, even though translation changes the text and meaning of Scripture, it is equally clear that the translation can continue to function meaningfully as Scripture. This was certainly the case of the Septuagint. When confronted with the fact of its divergences from the original Hebrew text, Alexandrian Jews responded not by revising their Bible, but by talking about the pedigree of the translation and its affirmation both by the Jewish community and by God himself. Moreover, we learn from Qumran, Alexandria, and the early church that these believers could accept, use, and integrate into their view of Scripture the fact that a book like Jeremiah could exist in different forms (one shorter, one longer) or a book like Isaiah could have clearly different senses in Hebrew and Greek. The believer could move between them, seeing both as Word of God to him or her in different contexts or answering different questions. We are confronted with a similar situation — multiple English translations, Bibles in multiple languages, the availability of the reconstructed Hebrew and Greek texts — all functioning as Word of God for readers (sometimes the same reader) in different contexts and for different questions. Realizing this is the second remedy against an overly-literalistic approach to the Bible.

Third, we have observed a certain fluidity to the scope of the canon of Scriptures, or at least of books functioning with the authority of Scripture. At Qumran, *Jubilees* and the *Community Rule* were as normative for the life of the community as any book of the Hebrew Bible. In Alexandria, even though the canon

might have included the same books as the Hebrew Bible, it assuredly contained longer forms of some of these books — Greek Esther, with six additions making the Hebrew version, in fact, far more religious, and Greek Daniel, with two additional stories and two additional prayers. Moreover, books were now being written by Diaspora Jews looking to Intertestamental stories like the Maccabean martyrs as the basis for exhortations to the life of piety. In the early church, this trend continues, with New Testament authors drawing on books like Ben Sira, Wisdom of Solomon, and Tobit, and with the early church collecting a New Testament and expanding their Old Testament to include these additional books which their leaders found so inspiring and helpful. In the Reformation period, when the cry of *sola Scriptura* — “Scripture only” — was raised to counter the power of Catholic tradition, it became important to determine the boundaries of those Scriptures like never before. Nevertheless, the Apocrypha had been so important for the development of the church’s faith and practice, that the Reformers kept translating and printing them as part of their Bibles. Because of this, I always urge my own students to adopt the practice of the printers of the first King James Bible and keep an Apocrypha close at hand — a priceless window into Jewish faith and practice, and the most important gateway into the Jewish environment of the early church.

Finally, even more important than the text type we engage as our Scripture (Hebrew Bible, Greek Old Testament, Greek New Testament, English Bible) or the scope of what we include as our Scripture are the interests and convictions we bring to the text. Their convictions about their Teacher of Righteousness and their own importance in God’s plan determined how the Qumran sectarians would read the Prophets and the Psalms: they did not learn this from the Scriptures, but brought it to the Scriptures and, predictably, found it confirmed in the Scriptures. The Alexandrian Jews’ conviction that Scripture sought to answer the same questions and lead to the same ethical goals as those posed by Greek philosophers determined their reading of the Scriptures. The early Christians’ experience of the Spirit through their trust in Jesus, and their convictions about Jesus’ role in bringing them to God, opened up a wholly new and unprecedented reading the Scriptures to them. Now the pattern of a suffering, dying Messiah who takes away the sins of the world and rises again jumped off every page — for the first time in the reading of the Jewish Scriptures. As we come to the Scriptures, we hope to allow it to criticize our faults, confirm our faith, and comfort our hearts,<sup>29</sup> but we also are challenged by our tour to become aware of how our convictions and interests determine what we will see, and what we will not see, in the text, and thus how we limit our own reading of the Bible.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from a public lecture given on April 4, 2004, for the exhibit, *From the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Forbidden Book* (John S. Knight Center, Akron, Ohio).

<sup>2</sup> See further Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (New York: Penguin and Allen Lane, 49-66; Lawrence H. Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their True Meaning for Judaism and Christianity* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 65-95.

<sup>3</sup> See also D. A. deSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 48-55 and the literature cited there.

<sup>4</sup> The most important of these manuscripts have been carefully collated and made accessible in English translation in Martin Abegg, Jr., Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999).

<sup>5</sup> For a fuller discussion of the question of "canon" in early Judaism, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987), 174-195; deSilva, *Apocrypha*, 30-34.

<sup>6</sup> These figures are taken from Lawrence Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their True Meaning for Judaism and Christianity* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 163.

<sup>7</sup> Aron Dotan (ed.), *Biblia Hebraica Leningradensia* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001), ix.

<sup>8</sup> This would be the position of Schiffman, *Reclaiming*, 169.

<sup>9</sup> *Jubilees* is also cited as authoritative support for the community's decision not to allow men over the age of sixty to hold community offices (CD X 5-12, citing *Jub.* 23.11).

<sup>10</sup> Abegg, *et al.*, *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, 480-481; see also the more nuanced tally in John J. Collins, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: Routledge, 1997), 18..

<sup>11</sup> From Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (4<sup>th</sup> ed; New York: Penguin, 1995), 344-345.

<sup>12</sup> See Abegg, *et al.*, *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, 213-214, 224-225, who point out that Josephus, writing in the late first century CE, knew a text of 1 Samuel that included this

paragraph as well (see Josephus, *Antiquities* 6.5.1).

<sup>13</sup> See Abegg, *et al.*, *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, 382, 388.

<sup>14</sup> See Karen Jobes and Moises Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2000), 173-176; Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 321.

<sup>15</sup> This is not to deny that stunning discoveries of individual Septuagint manuscripts have been made, although the most important of these also happened prior to the turn of the twentieth century and so news of their discovery failed to penetrate the popular mind through the media.

<sup>16</sup> For a critical assessment of the historicity of *Letter of Aristeas*, see Jobes and Silva, *Septuagint*, 33-36.

<sup>17</sup> Jobes and Silva, *Septuagint*, 95; Staffan Olofsson, *God Is My Rock: A Study of Translation Technique and Theological Exegesis in the Septuagint* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1990).

<sup>18</sup> Jobes and Silva, *Septuagint*, 149-150.

<sup>19</sup> It is surprising to find it still promoted so recently, for example, in E. Oikonomos, "The Significance of the Deuterocanonical Writings in the Orthodox Church," pp. 16-32 in S. Meurer (ed.), *The Apocrypha in Ecumenical Perspective* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1991), 17, and in Demetrius Constantelos, "The Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books: An Orthodox View," pp. xxvii-xxx in John R. Kohlenberger III (ed.), *he Parallel Apocrypha* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), xxvii. See the discussion to the contrary in deSilva, *Apocrypha*, 29, and the fuller treatments of the subject in A. C. Sundberg, *The Old Testament of the Early Church* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1964); R. Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church and Its Background in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985).

<sup>20</sup> See the discussion of the provenance of 4 *Maccabees* in D. A. deSilva, 4 *Maccabees* (Sheffield Guides to the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 18-21 and the literature therein cited, especially J. W. van Henten, "A Jewish Epitaph in a Literary Text: 4 Macc 17.8-10," pp. 44-69 in J. W. van Henten and P. W. van der Horst (eds.), *Studies in Early Jewish Epigraphy* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).



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<sup>21</sup> Figures from Moises Silva, "Old Testament in Paul," pp. 630-642 in G. F. Hawthorne, R. P. Martin, and D. G. Reid (eds.), *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 631.

<sup>22</sup> See also the supporting figures gathered in Jobes and Silva, *Septuagint*, 189-190, and the studies cited there.

<sup>23</sup> See, further, D. A. deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 356-57, 362-67.

<sup>24</sup> See further the discussion in H. W. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 273-275; William Lane, *Hebrews 9-13* (Dallas: Word, 1991), 262-263; D. A. deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle "to the Hebrews"* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 320-322.

<sup>25</sup> We can also see the freedom with which the New Testament author shaped the quotation: he conveniently omitted the last nine Greek words of Psalm 40:8 with their reference to doing God's will according to the Torah, shaping the end of the quotation to be more congenial to the incarnation of Jesus:

"I have come; I desired to do your will, O my God, according to your law" (Ps 40:8 LXX)

"I have come to do your will, O God" (Ps 40:8 as quoted in Hebrews 10:7).

<sup>26</sup> See deSilva, *Apocrypha*, 22-24, 192-197.

<sup>27</sup> See, further, deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 86-90.

<sup>28</sup> See the fuller discussion of the role of the Apocrypha in the Christian churches in deSilva, *Apocrypha*, 26-41 and the literature cited there.

<sup>29</sup> To borrow language from a "prayer for illumination" from Horton Davies, *Prayers and Other Resources for Public Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976).



## **The Changing Face of Christian Responsibility Over Time**

By Walter Hampel\*

### **Introduction**

The site of Westminster Abbey in London, England has served as a place of Christian worship for over a thousand years. Originally founded in the 10<sup>th</sup> century as a Benedictine monastery on the Fleet River's Thorney Island, the Abbey has seen the coronation of every English monarch (except for Edward V and Edward VIII) since the year 1066. God has been praised in chanted Psalms from the Abbey's beginnings, up to the present time.

Consider how those Christians participating in worship a millennium ago have much in common with us. We each would look to Christ's atoning death on the cross for our redemption. We each would find the very definition of our Christianity in our common belief in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.<sup>1</sup> We each would praise God and pray to Him for our needs. We each would hear the words of Scripture and be moved by the same Holy Spirit to confess 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism.'<sup>2</sup>

While we have very much in common with the Christians, who over the centuries have worshipped in Westminster Abbey, there are significant differences. Some of these differences are denominational or theological in nature. Yet, there are differences which exist independent of whether the worshipper in the Abbey was a 13<sup>th</sup> century Catholic, a 16<sup>th</sup> century Anglican or a 21<sup>st</sup> century Evangelical.

There would be differences of language, of literacy and countless other factors. These differences are dependent on things such as the economy, history and nuances of culture. What is difficult in one time and circumstance may be very easy in another. For example, an 11<sup>th</sup> century Christian worshipping at the Abbey would have had to spend a fortune in his era to obtain a copy of the Bible in his own language. His 21<sup>st</sup> century counterpart would have to spend no more than an hour's worth of his wages to obtain the same goal.

The responsibilities and privileges of a Christian can and do change with the passage of time. Our responsibilities and privileges as Christians have a constant factor across the years of church history by our belief in the core

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essentials of the faith, our freedom in Christ and being obedient to God's unchanging commands. Yet, much of our responsibility and privilege is found in a Christianity which has remained true to its unchanging core and has developed flexible practices that operate within our cultural environment and change with the passage of time.

The dynamic nature of our privilege and responsibility over time can be seen in the pages of Scripture itself. The Bible clearly shows that God engaged in relationship with numerous persons over the years, starting with Adam and Eve, and then others such as Abel, Enoch and Noah. Centuries after Noah, God engaged in a personal covenant with Abram, a migrant from the land of Mesopotamia. Over four centuries after Abraham, God revealed Himself to Moses and disclosed to him an aspect of his nature previously unknown and unrevealed, namely his being the ever present 'I AM.'<sup>3</sup>

The progressive nature of biblical revelation can be seen in the promise of a Messiah. In Genesis 3:15, the verse often referred to as the Protoevangelium, God offers the promise of an offspring, born of a woman, who would crush the serpent's head. No other details are given. Yet, as Old Testament history progressed, more detail is revealed and discerned. It was understood that the Messiah would be a descendant of King David, born in the town of Bethlehem.<sup>4</sup> In the time after the return from the Babylonian Exile, the prophet Zechariah was shown that the high priest Joshua, who bore the same name that the Messiah would bear centuries later, was 'symbolic of things to come.'<sup>5</sup>

The ministry, passion, death and resurrection of the Lord showed how Jesus taught a superior position on the Old Testament Law. The Law, under Him, was to be fulfilled completely and not simply abolished.<sup>6</sup> According to Paul, the incarnation of Christ happened at just the right time in history.<sup>7</sup> The promise of the Messiah is testimony to the fact that even the contents of the Bible, especially those texts pertaining to Messiah, became more detailed as time went by.

### Limited Comparison

This exploration of the constantly changing scope of Christian responsibility looks at the church on Earth throughout history. In some senses, the church's growth is comparable to the growth and development of an individual human being. Normally, a person will progress through distinct stages of development. One's base of knowledge should, ideally, increase over time. In



the post-apostolic times in which we live, this does not mean the existence of an open-ended canon of Scripture. That canon was closed as the apostolic era was ending. It does mean that the capacity for wisdom, namely the proper application of knowledge, should also increase over time. While the Bible will not increase in size over time, one should expect the development of Christian theology and spirituality to naturally increase as a function of time.

However, as with most analogies, the 'church/human body' analogy breaks down in certain areas. The Lord Jesus promised that his church on Earth would never go extinct.<sup>8</sup> Yet, individually, death has been one constant linking every human together in a common fate.

### **Framework**

The exploration of how Christian responsibility changes over time can be viewed through a specific framework characterized by fixed principles and dynamic practices. For our purposes here, a principle will be defined as an unchanging element of the Christian faith. A practice is a way in which the principle is expressed. It must be applicable to the time and circumstance in which it is expressed. A practice thus will and must be subject to change over time.

### **The Biblical Case for Principle and Practice**

The Bible makes a strong case for recognizing certain unchanging principles and for practices that derive from those principles. Such principles must be readily adaptable to changing times, cultures and circumstances. One example is that of Sabbath-keeping in Israel during the time of Jesus' earthly ministry. Keeping the Sabbath was a God-given principle. The Pharisees of the early 1<sup>st</sup> century developed distorted practices based on a misunderstanding of the principles of the Sabbath. They established detailed regulations for keeping the Sabbath despite the fact that the Misnah stated that

rules for the sabbath are like mountains hanging by the air, for Scripture is scanty and the rules many.<sup>9</sup>

One example of a Sabbath rule which developed over time was that of the Sabbath's day walk. Everett Ferguson writes that

Exodus 16:29 was understood as prohibiting travel on the Sabbath. The effort to define what was a person's "own place"

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and what constituted "going out" led to the limitation of two thousand cubits on a Sabbath's day's journey.<sup>10</sup>

These rules began to take on a life of their own. Observing the non-biblically delivered rules for Sabbath-keeping came to be considered as important as the Sabbath itself. Practice had become as important as principle.

The Lord Jesus delighted in keeping the Sabbath as a principle as well as going out of his way to break the man-made rules that crept up around it. In distinction to the legalistic Sabbath practices of the Pharisees, the Lord Jesus reminds us: "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."<sup>11</sup> Ironically from the perspective of the Pharisees, the Lord did something novel by getting back to the original intent of the Sabbath. Ben Witherington remarks that the function of the Sabbath is to restore and renew creation to its full capacity...<sup>12</sup>

The Gospels tell us that attending synagogue service was Jesus' custom on Sabbath.<sup>13</sup> On numerous occasions, Jesus healed on the Sabbath.<sup>14</sup> Contrary to the Pharisaic view of healing as a work best left for any day other than the Sabbath, the Lord points out that these same Pharisees would not think twice about coming to the aid of a helpless animal on the Sabbath.<sup>15</sup> The healing and restoration which Christ brought was something to be particularly done on the Sabbath<sup>16</sup>, a day not only commemorating God's rest after creation but a true rest which embodies restoration with God.<sup>17</sup>

### Biblical Examples of Principle and Practice

A prime example of principle and practice is found in the biblical treatment of God's edict: 'Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.'<sup>18</sup> The original context is the presentation by Moses of a number of various laws to the people of Israel just prior to their entry into the Promised Land. The command seems to stand alone in its context. The prior commands deal with the laws regulating how severely a criminally guilty individual may be beaten. The command immediately following addresses the requirements for levirate marriage.

Not muzzling an ox during threshing was a binding law to be followed in Israel. Yet, centuries after this law was given, the apostle Paul understands this practice as having a much deeper principle underlying it. He discusses this in 1 Corinthians 9 as he explores the material benefits to which a preacher of the Gospel is entitled. Paul wonders about the compensation that he is allowed for

his work in the ministry. In the midst of this discussion, Paul quotes Deuteronomy 25:4 and adds

Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest.<sup>19</sup>

While this specific law, in practice, is intended to protect oxen, its principle is not limited to threshing oxen but includes humans in their work as well. Here we have a clear case of one text of Scripture commenting on another to demonstrate the validity of both a practice and its underlying principle as well.

A second biblical example is found in the account of the Lord Jesus washing the feet of His disciples at the Last Supper.<sup>20</sup> Right up to the present day, many Christian denominations and sects practice a foot washing ceremony during the Maundy Thursday service. There are some who hold the foot washing ceremony as an ordinance of the church and regard this in sacramental terms.

The purpose of this article is not to undermine the theology of those who practice a foot washing ceremony and may even hold it as a sacrament of the church. The purpose here is to demonstrate that there is an underlying principle which the Lord presents to each generation of believers. The Lord Jesus indicated that what He was doing was to provide an example to His disciples. The Greek word rendered as 'example', 'υποδειγμα' bears the meaning of something to be imitated.

To follow Jesus' practice of foot washing in a modern context, apart from its commemorative or sacramental dimensions, would be considered by the recipient of the foot washing as an odd and possibly offensive practice. For a 1<sup>st</sup> century, sandal-wearing traveler in a dry and dusty Palestine, foot washing was regarded as a courtesy. Over the centuries, changes in climate, customs and clothing have rendered the need for foot washing obsolete in Western culture.

The Lord Jesus intended to do more with His actions that night than only preserve them as an enduring ordinance for the church. He provided an example and model of humble servant leadership. Concerning this and every other biblical model and example, David Wells reminds us that

It is the task of theology, then, to discover what God has said in and through Scripture and to clothe that in a conceptuality which is native to our own age. Scripture, at its *terminus a quo*, needs to be de-contextualized in order to grasp its transcultural content, and it needs to be re-contextualized in

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order that its content may be meshed with the cognitive assumptions and social patterns of our own time.<sup>21</sup>

The Christian of this and every era must understand what it means to show humility and a servant's heart and mind in the role of leadership. To do this, one must learn to de-contextualize the principles of Scripture and re-contextualize them in one's own time, culture and circumstances.

Christians must keep unchanging principles and changeable practices in balance. Sometimes, it's easy and straightforward. Yet, in more instances than we might expect, it can be a difficult task. For example, all Christians would see the statement:

He (Christ) was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification<sup>22</sup>

as a fixed principle. The truth of this statement remains true through all of time. The changing practice is manifested in how Christians have applied this unalterable truth to differing cultures and times. Some have proclaimed it in the setting of a church service. Others, like John Wesley, broke with custom and preached Christ in open fields and in the front of mine shafts as miners were waiting to start their workday. Wesley saw this as the most effective way to bring Christ's good news to his fellow Englishmen and Englishwomen.

Sometimes, it is difficult to know when a principle is being changed or a practice is being kept fixed. One's culture and pre-suppositions can blur the lines of distinction between principle and practice. C.S. Lewis ably pointed out:

Every age has its own outlook. It is specially good at seeing certain truths and specially liable to make certain mistakes.<sup>23</sup>

One historical example of a practice being kept unchanged was the recitation of the prayers in Latin through much of the Middle Ages. The everyday language of the peoples in Europe started to shift away from Latin as the First Millennium progressed. The development of monasticism spurred an increase in the use and knowledge of Latin among the clergy, which in turn, acted as a further wedge between them and the laity. This was especially true when it came to prayer. Adriaan Bredero points out:

The laity's ignorance of doctrine and religious experience was mainly in regard to the prayers offered by the clergy. The clergy prayed in Latin and their prayers remained untranslated. Even "Ave Maria" did not become "Hail Mary." Active lay participation in the liturgy was out of the question. The laity went to church mainly as spectators.<sup>24</sup>



A distinct shift happened during the time of Charlemagne. This shift had to do with how prayer was perceived. The biblical examples of prayer portray the act of praying as conversation with God. It is a means of deepening relationship with Him. By the time of his reign in the early 9<sup>th</sup> century, Charlemagne thought that the split between clergy and laity was

desirable because of the distinct task of a literate clergy, who needed to strive for the purest possible use of Latin to avoid answers to prayers that were the opposite of what they intended to ask of God. The fulfillment of one's desires, it was thought, depended on enunciating the correct formulas.<sup>25</sup>

The unchanging principle of prayer remained. However, the practice of prayer involved the forced use of Latin, long after it ceased being the everyday language of the people. Worse yet, the practice introduced a deep and artificial split between the clergy and the laity. The laity ceased from active liturgical prayer and became mere onlookers. The clergy were charged with being those who prayed. Yet, those prayers were formulaic. They bore a closer resemblance to magic than a biblically defined conversation with God.

Perhaps worse than treating a practice as a principle is when a practice is kept fixed but its corresponding principle is changed or compromised. Over the last two centuries, there have been a number of churches which have zealously preserved the practice of the format of their worship service, whether that liturgical format is high-church, low-church or something in between. Yet, in many of those churches, foundational beliefs which, from the start, have defined what it means to be a Christian, have been implicitly or explicitly denied. The virginal conception and birth of Christ and His physical resurrection are only two examples of core-beliefs of Christianity which have come under attack.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Swiss theologian Karl Barth wrestled with this balance of principle and practice. He respected the work of the theologians who had preceded him throughout church history. Yet, he did not treat their theology as unchangeable but subject to adjustment and refinement over time. Their theologies were an application of biblical principles. Even the then time-honored, 16<sup>th</sup> century Heidelberg Catechism was subject to revision since

This catechism also was an attempt at Christian doctrine. We live no longer in the sixteenth but in the twentieth century...If we concern ourselves today with Christian doctrine, there is no point in staring spellbound at the sixteenth century and holding on to what was said then and there as unmoveably and unchangeably as possible.<sup>26</sup>

### The Development of Doctrine

The shape and state of Christian doctrine is dependent on developments occurring with the passage of time. In his Bampton Lectures delivered at Oxford in 1864, Thomas Bernard observed

The developments of doctrine thus originated were the joint product of the revealed truth [of the Bible] and the condition of the mind which received it. The revealed truth was one, but the conditions of the human mind are infinitely various, and hence and endless variety in the developments themselves.<sup>27</sup>

Bernard emphasized a time dependency within the writings of the New Testament itself. He said:

The doctrine of the Gospels not only looks as if it were to be followed by another stage of teaching, but declares that such is the fact. I come to my second proposition, the personal teaching of the Lord is *a visibly progressive system, which, on reaching its highest point, declares its own incompleteness, and refers us to another stage of instruction.* (Emphasis in the original)<sup>28</sup>

Those teachings, given by the Lord Jesus were indeed the teachings of God given by God the Son Himself.<sup>29</sup> Yet, those teachings were a foundational beginning which were more fully developed by the church in its first generation. The account in the Book of Acts as well as the writings of Paul, Peter, James, etc. reflect not a change but a further development of the words of Christ. Just as the Law and the Prophets were the foundation for Christ and His teachings, Christ's proclamation of the Gospel message is foundational to the later-written epistles and Acts, in which the principles of the Gospel were applied in practice to the everyday world of the 1<sup>st</sup> century Roman Empire.

Thomas Bernard concentrated on the study of the development of the church's understanding of the Gospel within the framework of the New Testament. James Orr, a generation later, centered his attention on the developments of doctrine and dogma throughout church history. In his 1897 lectures on *The Progress of Dogma*, Orr made the case that theology, the queen of the sciences, like any other science will exhibit a natural, cumulative progress over time. Orr pointed out that while theology and natural science are ongoing efforts, certain findings have been made which will not be overturned with further discoveries. He said that

while its advance has not been without much conflict, much error, much implication with human sin and infirmity, and is yet far from complete, that advance has in the main been onward, and has yielded results which further progress will not subvert, any more than the future developments of science will subvert, say, such discoveries as the circulation of the blood, or the law of gravitation.<sup>30</sup>

Thus, when Orr speaks about the 'new theology' of his time, he demonstrates that such an approach is as invalid and counter-productive as medical science continually re-inventing itself and abandoning the solid findings and knowledge found in past generations.

James Orr believed that theological work did indeed proceed on the foundation of Scripture but certain emphases in theology would naturally develop and accumulate over time. The field of apologetics is cited as the first major branch of Christian theology to develop in the church era. It was natural for Christians to think through the unique claims of the faith as well as developing arguments which demonstrated the reasonableness of Christianity to a skeptical Roman Empire. Orr cites what he sees as the logical progression of the theological effort, namely, apologetics, the doctrines of God, the doctrines of Man, Christology, Soteriology and Eschatology.<sup>31</sup>

In light of Bernard's and Orr's reflections and observations about the cumulative nature of theological work over time, modern attempts to 'get back to the New Testament church' must be analyzed carefully and acted upon with caution. Much of the contemporary desire to get back to the 1<sup>st</sup> century church stems from the desire to rid the ship of the church of its barnacles and encrustations picked up on its more than 2,000 year voyage through history. Such an effort must be applauded. However, just as Orr had to confront the 'new theology' of his time which tried to cut itself off from the historical development of Christian theology, we too face a time and circumstance in which many think of the sound doctrines of biblical theology as being 'barnacle-like' in and of themselves and therefore must be removed. This approach is a dangerous one. To appeal once more to the comparison of the church's growth with that of human growth, it is expected that a human being will mature with time. When growth does not happen, it is regarded as a dangerous 'failure to thrive' condition. In terms of the church, the church of the 21<sup>st</sup> century cannot be the church of the 1<sup>st</sup> century. It is not supposed to be. The attempt to do so would be to ignore 2,000 years of history and development. It would signal the church's 'failure to thrive.'

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Christianity of any given era will have available to it the Scriptures as well as a collection of devotional and theological works which have grown over time and the amount of which are unique to their time. A 21<sup>st</sup> century Christian should not act as if she has no more theological reflection and wisdom available to her than a Christian of the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Consider how Luther in the 16<sup>th</sup> century would have access to the works of Anselm and Aquinas but not those of the English Puritans, Jonathan Edwards, Thomas Bernard or James Orr. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we have access to all of them. In addition, 21<sup>st</sup> century Christians have far greater abilities to access these works and those of current writers than our predecessors had in accessing the works that were ancient and contemporary to them. Obviously, 21<sup>st</sup> century Christianity does not have access to theological and devotional writings of the 22<sup>nd</sup> century as they have not yet been written. The works being written in this century will become a part of the theological treasure of the church of the 22<sup>nd</sup> century and beyond. The surviving works of individuals such as Perpetua, Athanasius, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Luther, Edwards, Tozer and a host of others, both ancient and modern, both east and west, northern hemisphere and southern, are a truly a treasure to the church. They must not be regarded as a quaint but disposable part of church's treasure of collected wisdom found in writing.

### Theology in the present moment

A theologian must always be mindful of the times in which he lives. Good theology will balance the principles of a never-changing Scripture with an ever-changing culture. David Wells makes this point clearly:

I have also insisted that part of the theological task must always be to ask what it means to have this Word in this world at this time.<sup>32</sup>

To do good theology, one must be committed to knowing the Bible and also to knowing one's time and culture. Much of the treasure of devotional and theological writings over the last two millennia owes its existence to a writer recognizing a changed condition in society that needed addressing in the light of Scripture. Such works reflect a reaction to cultural thought. One example is *On the Incarnation*, penned by Athanasius in the 4th century. As questions about the nature of Christ were raised by the church at that time, Athanasius sought to address the errors of the prevailing Arian view of Christ and correct them by pointing out Jesus' two natures, both fully human and fully divine.



Changes in culture are the result of developments in the many fields of human knowledge and endeavor over the ages. Changes in any area of culture may force the church to think through issues which would never have required reflection and addressing during a prior period in history. While it is not always obvious at the time, the theological exploration of an issue may end up being done well or done poorly. An exploration which is faithful to the unchanging principles of the Bible leaves a useful legacy to future Christians. One that is done poorly can, conversely, leave a questionable legacy that can hinder the spiritual and theological growth of future generations of Christians.

An example from two centuries distant shows how difficult the theological task can be. In the 19th century, the field of medicine was making tremendous strides. Along with these came the development of safer and more reliable forms of anesthesia. To an early 21st century mind, such a development is seen as a tremendous blessing for those undergoing various forms of surgery or medical procedures. Yet, in the early 1800s, there were those who thought that anesthesia should not be used on a woman in the process of giving birth. The concerns were not medical but theological. The question arose in light of the Genesis 3:16 passage in which God told Eve: 'I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children.'

Imagine being a theologian of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century who is wrestling with the possibility that a new development in medicine could be used to subvert God's will. You could even look to the experience and wisdom of the past and find a precedent for this concern. In 1591, Dame Euphanie Macalyane of Scotland had secretly requested a form of anesthesia from her mid-wife to alleviate the pains of the process of childbirth. When King James VI of Scotland learned about this, Fülöp-Miller writes that:

he took the strictest measures: a pyre was erected on the Castle Hill, and there the lady was burned alive as a warning to all women who might endeavor to evade the curse of Eve.<sup>33</sup>

Ironically, the Scottish doctor who developed anesthesia for childbirth, James Young Simpson, had to 'wear a second hat' to provide the theological basis for a defense of his discovery. This action was not without precedent. Over 200 years earlier, Galileo Galilei, in his 1615 work *Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina of Tuscany*, took up the task of doing theology to defend his astronomical observations and findings against the Aristotelian, geocentric-based theology of the time. Simpson pointed out that the same word used for the pains of labor in Genesis 3:16 is also used for Adam's toil in tilling the ground found in Genesis 3:17. Unfortunately, the issue at that time was regarded as resolved

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by the example of national leadership and not through theological reflection. The issue was 'settled' when Queen Victoria opted to use anesthesia for her birthing experience. Simpson then became a national hero after being earlier vilified by the clergy of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Scotland. For Christians in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we see this as a settled issue. We understand God's words to Eve as descriptive (i.e. the birth process is a physically painful process) rather than prescriptive (i.e. when one gives birth, it must be kept a painful experience). Coming to this understanding took time and the conclusion was not an easy one to reach.

A dual caution must be kept in mind when working through theological reflections and explorations in a new area. The first is to be cautious in naming something as sinful. In the case of the development of anesthesia for childbirth in 19<sup>th</sup> century Scotland, the clergy of Edinburgh were quick to decry it as a terrible evil. Yet, as James Simpson himself pointed out, the theology upon which they based their conclusion was faulty. Theirs was a view which other Christian thinkers were able to correct over time.

The other caution is the need to be faithful to Scripture where it speaks clearly on sin. The cumulative nature of Christian theology does not give one the right to defend as good, those things which the church in all generations has considered sinful. Just as there are those who treat any level of doctrinal development as "barnacles" to be removed from the church, there are those who believe that most if not all past definitions of sin are inherently wrong. However, Christians must not think it valid to attempt to define sin out of existence. The cautions must be heeded to avoid the extremes in regard to sin. Scripture summarizes these arguments best: "Everything that does not come from faith is sin."<sup>34</sup>

We too have issues of our time which require serious thought and theological reflection. As terrorism has become a national concern for many Western nations at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Just War theologies, some dating back to the time of Augustine in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, are being re-appraised by many theologians. The development of technology which may possibly lead to human cloning presents us with the very real need to more deeply examine our biblical and theological understandings of what it means to be a human, made in the image of God.

The changed times have also given us changed responsibilities to face those issues resulting from the passage of time. For example, one of the primary audiences of the New Testament writings was slaves who had little economic or

political power in the Roman Empire of the 1st century. The average adult in early 21st century Western culture is a political and economic powerhouse compared to our 1st century Christian counterparts in the Roman Empire. Those changed conditions force us to think in different categories. How do the Bible's injunctions to rulers, which virtually never applied to our 1st century counterparts, apply to us now as those who participate in the political and governing process of our nations by voting and are able to be elected to positions of government leadership? What are our responsibilities to our fellow humans around the world, whose economic plight we can see, in real time, over satellite-based news reports? What is our responsibility to know and proclaim our faith in Christ, when for the first time in history, through either print or electronic means, without leaving our house, we can read and access multiple translations of the Bible as well as a vast collection of theological and devotional writings that we literally could not finish reading within our own lifetime? How will this affect, and how should this affect, our prayer life? Our devotional practices? Our 'redeeming the time' of our present moment?

The answers to these, and other questions raised by the conditions of culture in the present moment, are in the process of being thought through and reflected upon. It is not in the scope of this article to answer these questions. Posing them becomes necessary in light of world circumstances in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. To be a good theologian, one must not neglect the unchanging Scriptures. However, to customize the application of the Bible to our own time and circumstances, we also cannot neglect an awareness and understanding of ever-changing current events. It requires prayer for the wisdom to use the resources of our time to fulfill the responsibilities of our time in a manner that glorifies God. If, in God's timing of history, He permits the centuries to roll on, the Christian faithful of the 21st, 22nd, 23rd centuries and beyond will rely, in large part, on the wisdom and writings of those in this present time.

This understanding of the progressive nature of Christian theology provides us a real sense of the communion of saints. We have been given a legacy in the work and teachings of Christ and the apostles. They have laid the foundation on which all things done in the name of Christ must be built.

We have a real connection to the saints whose work is built upon the foundation of Christ. We are the recipients of their legacy. Contributions have been made by writers such as Athanasius and Aquinas who with their pens wrote so eloquently of their Savior. Others have been made by artists such as Michelangelo and Rembrandt who portrayed biblical images with beauty and insight as well as architects such as the cathedral builders of Europe who praised



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God in stone and desired to build embassies of Heaven here on Earth. Most profoundly, there have been mothers and fathers who have prayed with and for their children and modeled for them "the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints."<sup>35</sup>

In this sense, to quote Sir Isaac Newton, we stand "on the shoulders of giants."<sup>36</sup> There are millions of these giants who have inhabited history. It must be understood that because of the cumulative nature of the Christian legacy, we too will have the opportunity to be giants to whom future generations of Christians will look for guidance and for wisdom. We will be building on the one and only foundation just as our spiritual ancestors did. They, like us, will have their works of legacy judged by God. With this in mind, we must add our layer of the building wisely, knowing that we leave a spiritual inheritance to our own generation and those yet-to-be-born in Christ.

### Talents

The time, culture and circumstances in which we live are like the talents mentioned in the Lord Jesus' parable of the talents.<sup>37</sup> Not everyone in the parables received the same amount. In the same way, not everyone in human history has been given the exact same opportunities. We have been called to be faithful with what we have been given. But, as in the parables, the amount with which we have been entrusted has not been exactly the same for each individual in human history. Plainly, such things as gender, race and ethnicity have, over the centuries, been determining factors for social status, political power and economic success. In the realm of technology, a Christian living in a post-Gutenberg society would have easier access to the Bible in its printed form than a pre-15<sup>th</sup> century Christian would have access to the Bible in its hand copied format. A Christian living in early 21<sup>st</sup> century would have access to the Bible in ways that would be the envy of those living only a generation earlier (i.e. affordable paper texts, electronic storage on computers, the Internet and on personal digital assistants (PDAs)). While these factors may be difficult to quantify, there is a sense that those Christians at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century have been given a greater number of talents than those in prior times.

However, there is another factor which must be considered. While the nature of the Christian legacy is cumulative, not every development has been positive. The effects of sin on a culture can act as a negative talent. Too often, sin within a culture has the effect of producing moral blind spots, not only among the general population but within the Christian community as well. In an



example from American history, we are reminded of those who in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries bore the name of Christ and yet enslaved those also made in His image. These effects can and do hinder one's walk with Christ. Clearly, a society which openly promotes Christian virtue and truth acts as a support for a believer while a society which openly scorns Christian virtue and truth is one in which a faithful life in Christ is that much more difficult.

### Conclusion

It is the role of the church through its leaders, teachers and theologians to recognize the continual and on-going need to preserve biblical principles unchanged and to customize how those unchanging principles are applied to those living them out. As cultural changes continue at a remarkable pace at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the church is faced with a daunting challenge. The very nature of careful reflection is that it takes time. A way of responding and addressing the changing aspects of culture must be developed so that the church does not fall into the trap of providing rapidly produced but shallowly developed theologies. Nor can we take so much time for reflection that the concern being addressed has, in the culture's perspective, come and gone. This will require a wisdom fine-tuned and unique to our times.

At the time when Israel's first king, Saul, died in battle, it was unclear to the people what they should do. Should there be a dynastic succession which placed a descendant of Saul on the throne? Should David, the hero and warrior par excellence become king? In the midst of those circumstances, God provided that there would be

men of Issachar, who understood the time and knew what Israel should do.<sup>38</sup>

In light of a culture in which events seem to be going in 'fast-forward', we must strive for the type of wisdom and insight which the men of Issachar possessed in the time of David and apply that same type of wisdom to our time as well.

### Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Dan Lewis, "The Experience of Christian Faith: A Phenomenological Exploration", found in *The Bulletin of the Evangelical Philosophical Society*, Volume 14:1, 1991, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> Ephesians 4:5 NIV.

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<sup>3</sup> Exodus 6:3 NIV.

<sup>4</sup> Micah 5:2.

<sup>5</sup> Zechariah 3:8 NIV.

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 5:17.

<sup>7</sup> Galatians 4:4.

<sup>8</sup> Matthew 16:18.

<sup>9</sup> Quotation of Hagigah 1:8 (Misnah) in Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990, 441.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 441.

<sup>11</sup> Mark 2:27 NIV.

<sup>12</sup> Ben Witherington III, *The Christology of Jesus*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990, 68.

<sup>13</sup> Luke 4:16.

<sup>14</sup> Matthew 12:9-14; Luke 13:10-17; Luke 14:1-4; John 5:1-14.

<sup>15</sup> Matthew 12:11-12.

<sup>16</sup> Luke 13:16.

<sup>17</sup> Hebrews 4:1-10.

<sup>18</sup> Deuteronomy 25:4 NIV.

<sup>19</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:9-10 NIV.

<sup>20</sup> John 13:1-20.

<sup>21</sup> David Wells, *The Nature and Function of Theology* found at [http://www.religion-online.org/cgi-bin/researchd.dll/showarticle?item\\_id=10](http://www.religion-online.org/cgi-bin/researchd.dll/showarticle?item_id=10).

<sup>22</sup> Romans 4:25 NIV.

<sup>23</sup> C.S. Lewis, Introduction to Saint Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, translated & edited by a religious of CSMV, Crestwood: Saint Vladimir Seminary Press, 2002, 4.

<sup>24</sup> Adriaan H. Bredero, *Christendom and Christianity in the Middle Ages*, transl. Reinder Bruinsma, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994, 16.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>26</sup> Karl Barth, *The Heidelberg Catechism for Today*, Richmond: John Knox Press, 1964, 10.

<sup>27</sup> Thomas Bernard, *The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament*, Minneapolis: Klock & Klock Publishers, 1978, 35.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 90-91.

<sup>29</sup> John 6:45.

<sup>30</sup> James Orr, *The Progress of Dogma*, Vancouver: Regent College, 2000, 9.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 21-22.

<sup>32</sup> David F. Wells, *Losing Our Virtue – Why the Church Must Recover Its Moral Vision*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1998, 4.

<sup>33</sup> Rene Fülöp-Miller, *Triumph Over Pain*, trans. Eden & Cedar Paul, New York: Literary Guild of America, 1938, 335.

<sup>34</sup> Romans 14:23 NIV.

<sup>35</sup> Jude 3 NIV.

<sup>36</sup> Sir Isaac Newton, in a letter to Robert Hooke, dated February 5, 1675, found at [http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Isaac\\_Newton/](http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Isaac_Newton/).

<sup>37</sup> Matthew 25:14-30.

<sup>38</sup> 1 Chronicles 12:32 NIV



## **Embracing Faith-Learning Integration in Christian Higher Education**

By Dawn Morton\*

### **Introduction**

Understanding and developing teaching with intentional integration of faith and learning is a critical issue in Christian Higher Education. Some would suggest it is a challenge for institutions and professors. The original intent of establishing colleges and universities was to train ministers and promote evangelical thinking (Ringenberg 1987, 79). Institutions are challenged because they have left their origins of proclaiming truth and now embrace half-truth or truths that have been twisted to fit all the lifestyles in our culture (Duduit 2002, 1).

Many institutions have stepped away from their historical roots of religion in order to embrace and not offend anyone in our culture, declaring that the role of religion is a personal issue, not a public one (Monsma 1996, 75). Universities have separated themselves from faith and pursuit of "truth." There are many "truths" that are sought in knowledge but ultimate truth is laid aside (Lewis and Smith 1994, 133). Yet, without this distinct issue of faith applied to learning, Christian institutions become like other institutions within our culture (Dockery 2000, 1). Lacking of the foundation of faith, academics becomes merely an educational process instead of a life changing process meant to impact and embrace the whole person. We need to face the challenge of defining the terminology, declaring the purpose of faith – learning integration, and determine to apply the concept within Christian higher education.

### **Definition and Description of Terminology**

One problem involved in achieving faith-learning integration is a proper definition of the terminology. Faith-learning integration has become merely a cliché or a buzzword in the Christian education circle (Holmes 1999, 161). Definitions must be developed before a professor can accomplish the task. The words "faith," "learning," and "integration" need defining, as lack of definition presents lack of goals and means for accomplishment. Without proper understanding of terminology, the possibility of faith-learning integration can be laid aside in the process of education.

Faith can be described as "‘life of faith’ or ‘body of doctrine’" (Badley 1994, 28). Understanding the issue of faith is of essence because of the com-

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plexity of the subject. "Faith reflects: one's understanding and sense of the supernatural (believing); one's level of trust and commitment, relationship to the supernatural God (trusting and worship); and ethical and moral behavior, and interpersonal relationships (doing)" (Roy n.d., 2). Faith involves understanding of God, one's trust in and relationship with God, and how that plays out in relationships. Faith is built and made complete when there is an understanding of the creation that God has produced in the world (Harris 2000, 1). Faith involves the whole person, body, soul, and spirit. It is an expectation that "something good can happen because of one's faith in God's goodness and power" (Rosebrough 2002, 283).

Learning can be described as "process of learning' or 'body of knowledge'" (Badley 1994, 28). Learning in the true essence is "making a connection, seeing patterns and wholeness, seeing a 'big picture,' and finding meaning" (Roy n.d., 4). Learning is not only knowing the information, but also being able to process, make connections to one's life, and essentially finding meaning to life itself. It is looking beyond the information to see the connections to life.

The term "integration" is diverse and needs to be clarified with proper terminology (Badley 1994, 24). Integration is the combining of the elements of faith and learning. Throughout history faith has been the foundation of learning, intermixed with the disciplines, applied with critical thinking about the world. Integration could be described as "reintegrating a union that was broken apart in the course of history" (Holmes 1999, 161). What is being reintegrated? Historically, Christian colleges were founded on education and faith interacting together (Holmes 1999, 161-165). Today's colleges are not founded on faith. There has been a separation of education from faith, which has greatly affected the issue of critical thinking. Theology has been removed from the educational process. God and the concept of faith have been removed, even from "Christian" colleges. Today's universities offer education with "the ability to develop critical thinking skills, but seldom provides them with a way of relating one thing to another" (Matties n.d., 1). This type of educational process produces brokenness in education. There is disjointedness in connecting disciplines with faith and with other disciplines (Dockery 2000, 11). Integration, or reintegration, means: faith and learning are connected. Both need to be understood as complimentary. They are not in competition with each other but working side by side.

Faith-learning integration is described in a variety of ways: "a way of life and being...beyond the course content and affects the entire life of an individual...more than just familiarity with the subject...and bringing Christ

into the classroom” (Nwosu 1999, 44-45). A description of faith-learning integration could be “a scholarly project whose goal is to ascertain and to develop integral relationships which exist between the Christian faith and human knowledge, particularly as expressed in the various academic disciplines” (Hasker n.d., 1). Combining faith and understanding the connections to academics is the process of faith-learning integration.

### **Declaration of Purpose**

With a definition formed, we can discover the purpose of faith-learning integration within Christian higher education. Where does the process take us and in what form do we proceed? “Integration is a *process* as well as a *product*” (Estep 1998, 68). “Integration is a process, that must take place every day, because we are presented with new claims, new facts, new interpretations every day” (Harris 2000, 3). The process and product are intertwined and mingled with the purpose. One must declare the purpose with clarity and intent, in order to begin the process to achieve the product and end results.

“The ultimate aim of faith-learning integration is not merely to complete the integrative task within each separate discipline, but to enhance our overall vision of reality in the light of Christ” (Olthuis 1992, 5). Remembering there is a larger goal than merely the task of integration is vital for the professor. Molding students into leaders who will impact their culture and society with a Christian worldview is the purpose of faith-learning integration. This molding and shaping takes place with Christ at the center of all that is accomplished in the learning process. When integration has occurred in the student, it will affect “values, choices, decision-making, and ethics” of the student’s life (Harris 2000, 3). “Education that integrates faith and learning, that establishes and shapes a Christian worldview, can help restore the loss of morality and loss of accountability. It can help us be better people, better citizens, better employees” (Dockery 2000, 14). It is a life-changing agent.

Christ-centered classrooms, as well as colleges and universities are essential to faith-learning integration. It is not a matter of being “church-related” but one of being “Christ-centered” in all areas of the college or university” (Duduit 2002, 2). It is not *affiliation* with a denomination or tradition, but *adoration* with a living Christ that will impact our culture and society. Training others in education without faith and theology integrated into the studies, merely trains future faculty members that lack the understanding and knowledge of how to integrate faith and learning (White 1998, 616). Faith and learning ultimately restores humankind to the One who created and formed their being, which



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involves “redeemed thinking that properly honors Jesus Christ” (Holmes 1999, 167).

Emphasis of a Christian world-view should be a concern among all Christian faculty members (Olthuis 1992, 6). Communication among faculty and students promotes a “contract” that facilitates faith-learning integration. It is an understandable “contribution to the Kingdom of God” (Hasker n.d., 2). The professor and the student are in the process of learning so that the Kingdom of God can be built, lifted up, and expanded for His purposes. Christian minds need to be developed and formed which is the ultimate goal for faith-learning integration. The student will begin to think “Christianly” (Gangel 1978, 108). This Christian mindset will shape and form character creating integrity for the student” (Matties n.d., 1). Faith becomes the foundation for learning and it is connected to forming and shaping a Christian worldview (Gill 1979, 1009). The student will be impacted in his or her “views of truth” and will form a “well-grounded faith versus a blind faith” (Harris 2000, 3).

### Determination of Application

Determining how to apply faith-learning integration means there is not one single pattern for integration but rather a selection of methods that will produce results when applied in a proper manner (Olthuis 1975, 4). It is not an issue of what approach to use, as much as an issue of application of the faith and educational theory in any approach used. Different approaches of integration can be useful for the professor and the student.

Faith-learning integration is an area in which the Christian scholar must take initiative. Does one merely introduce faith-learning or is it a part of the personal core values of the instructor? Core values of an institution influence and affect the professor. The professor’s personal core values influence and affect the faith-learning integration process. A Christian scholar must have a core value of faith-learning in the process of instruction, or the material that is taught merely becomes information for the sake of the educational process. If the professor values the Christian faith, then the professor must have a way to introduce the subject of faith and maintain the openness of faith-learning within the classroom. The professor must have a passion for integrating faith into the academic part of learning.

What are some practical ways of integration within the classroom setting? The professor needs to have a plan of action in order to continually develop areas to enhance the faith-learning process and not merely teach the subject (Agee 1999, 202). “We must integrate our understanding of Scripture and theology with what we learn from other sources, relating biblical revelation



to general revelation" (Holmes 1999, 167). This understanding must be conveyed to the student. The word *INTEGRATION* becomes practical and more than a possibility when the following areas are considered for the application of faith-learning integration:

**Identify** the "course's foundational idea, issues in the field, aspects of character and virtue needed by Christian professionals to address the issues, and needed leadership qualities" (Scarlato 1999, 2).

**Nurture** pastoral skills such as taking prayer requests, implementing designed devotions that are appropriate for the subject taught then can be led by students and faculty, establishing individual prayer times appropriate for the class, asking students to reflect upon particular Scriptures throughout the week, but go beyond into "truth-searching" opportunities, always concerned with "pursuit of truth" (Coe 2000, 85; Gangel 1978, 107; Matties n.d., 2; Scarlato 1999, 3; Schmidt 1987, 272).

**Target** a world-view of Christianity in the process of faith-learning integration and relate it to academics in order to produce solid Christian thinking. "Christian thinking does not just happen but is deliberately designed by the effective Christian teacher" (Gangel 1978, 107). We must be intentional about integrating faith and learning with disciplines, as it is foundational to seeking and committing to truth (Dockery 2000, 13).

**Establish** personal times of prayer for guidance of creating the lesson planner and enhance personal spiritual formation through retreats and seminars (Moore and Woodward 1997, 303; Matties n.d., 2; Scarlato 1999, 2).

**Grasp** a good theological background in order to teach and allow the student to think critically through theological aspects (Gangel 1978, 105-106).

**Require** activities and produce questions that will assist the students "to link Scriptural ideas with class content" (Scarlato 1999, 3).

**Approach** to the integration process should be taken with "reverence, relevance, and relaxation" (Gangel 1978, 108). "The beginning point for thinking, learning, and teaching is our reverence before God the Father almighty,

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maker of heaven and earth” (Dockery 2000, 12). “Education is a sacred calling” (Holmes 1999, 167).

*Teach* the subject along with a list of Scriptures that will deal specifically with the discipline, specific Scriptures will help shape the devotionals (Scarlato 1999, 2).

*Inspire* critical thinking skills to enhance students to analyze critically the issues of faith intermixed with the disciplines and personal areas of the student’s life. “Education will therefore be an exploration that is critical, constructive, personal and relational” (Matties n.d., 2).

*Open mindedness* should be kept in the process of education yet keeping doctrine true to the Word of God always committed to “searching for truth” (Gangel 1978, 108; Matties n.d., 2). “One implication for teaching is the need for a safe place to explore the truth and openness to cultural and ethnic diversity as modeled for us by Jesus’ ministry in Galilee” (Pazmiño 2002, 69).

*Navigate* a variety of ways to integrate faith and academics such as using the Bible and Scriptures in class for activities, sharing personal stories of your own faith journey, living out one’s faith before the students and “add quotes from writings of various Christian authors” (Garzon 1999, 4; Rosebrough 2002, 296; Scarlato 1999, 3).

Although these areas can definitely be developed by any Christian professor, one may feel overwhelmed at the responsibility of teaching to not only inform, but to assist in transformation of the student, directing the student towards God’s will. “Our world needs leaders who dare to walk with God, seeking his mind and his leadership in every dimension of life, seeking to please him and to live out his will and purpose for their lives and for their world” (Agee 1999, 202). Professors are needed who are competent in teaching truth, yet able to have caring relationships with their students (Dockery 2000, 13). A professor needs to reflect upon his or her own teaching methods and styles as well as how to incorporate faith-learning integration into the classroom of the college, university or seminary that he or she serves. Beginning with one area of development will be a step in the direction of seeing faith-learning integration in process.

## Conclusion

No doubt, the terminology is not always clear and tends to be muddy depending on the context it is used. There are many understandings regarding faith-learning integration, but it is understandable in the context of a worldview of Christianity. All that we are in Christ flows out of us into the teaching experience. We relate ultimate truth in various ways to our students intermixed with the academic discipline, in hopes that the student will expand their thinking to impact their world not only in knowledge but also in faith. "A Christian world view shapes our view of education, pedagogy, and the social sciences, for all must answer the question: what is it that motivates humans" (Dockery 2000, 13)?

An understanding of faith-learning integration is necessary and possible for any Christian professor to attain, but the ultimate outcome falls in the lap of the student. "Curriculum developers and classroom teachers can do what they like to help the cause of integration, but ultimately, for integration to occur, the student must make connections between the various parts of the curriculum; in doing so, he or she also makes that curriculum meaningful and coherent" (Badley 1994, 25-26). When the professor has fulfilled the commitment to faith-learning integration, and implemented it within the learning environment; the student must be willing and able to connect it to their personal life and the world in which he or she lives. "It is this educational experience that confronts the inner needs of man as well as the needs of his society" (Burtchaell 1998, 760). "Learning shaped and formed by faith results in living that is shaped and formed by faith" (Dockery 2000, 14). When "learning shaped and formed by faith" transforms the student, then faith-learning integration, in its truest form has occurred. It is long lasting and affects the student throughout his or her lifetime and the world in which he or she lives.

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## Family in the Bible: A Brief Survey

by Brenda B. Colijn\*

There is no word in Hebrew or Greek that precisely corresponds to the English word "family." In both languages, the closest word could be translated "house" or "household": *bayit* in Hebrew and *oikos* or *oikia* in Greek. The same word can be used for the building or for the people who live in it. This term focuses on the household as a social and economic unit.<sup>1</sup>

The ancient Hebrew family included husband and wife, their children (and if their sons were married, their wives and children), the husband's parents, the husband's brothers and their families, the husband's unmarried sisters, and other relatives. It might also include multiple wives and concubines, with their children and their children's families. Besides those related by blood or marriage, the household would include servants and slaves, guests (who were bound to the family by the obligations of hospitality), and sojourners (aliens resident in the household and under its ongoing protection, often employees of the household). In a Greco-Roman context, the household would include the extended family, servants or slaves, clients, and guests.<sup>2</sup> Families might include children by adoption, although that practice was much more rare in the Old Testament period than in the New Testament period.<sup>3</sup>

This summary helps to explain the large size of the biblical family. The average American family today consists of 2.63 people; the average Israelite household would have consisted of 50 to 100 people.<sup>4</sup> For example, Jacob's household included about 70 people (Gen. 46:5-27). The modern American notion of family is more narrow, individualistic, privatistic, and exclusive than the biblical one.<sup>5</sup>

For ancient Mediterranean people, personal identity was not primarily individual, as it is in modern American culture. Instead, people derived their identity primarily from being members of particular groups, such as tribes, clans, and families.<sup>6</sup> In this cultural context, the family had an importance that would be difficult for many modern Americans to imagine.

The Old Testament affirms the biological family, which is assumed to be the basic unit of society. Israelite society was structured along kinship lines.<sup>7</sup> Much of Old Testament law regulates and protects family life.<sup>8</sup> But more than this basic affirmation and pragmatic regulation, the family is regarded as a

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source of divine blessing. This perspective begins in Genesis, when God creates and blesses the first family and gives them the command to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:27-28). Children are a blessing from the Lord (Ps. 127:3-5; 128). The gift of children to barren women is a particular blessing, since God contravenes nature to show his grace (1 Sam. 2:5; Ps. 113:9).

Old Testament faith had a strong corporate dimension. People did not participate in the covenant as isolated individuals, but as members of families, clans, and tribes. Religious commitments made by the head of the household involved the whole family. For example, Joshua spoke for his whole family when he said that he and his house would serve the Lord (Josh. 24:15). In early Old Testament times, the family was the center of worship. The father, as head of the household, was the priest for the household (Gen. 22:1-14; 26:23-25; Ex. 12:3-11).<sup>9</sup> Later the center of worship shifted to the tabernacle and the Temple, and an official priesthood was established. Even after the Temple was built, however, families continued to observe Passover; perform circumcisions, marriages, and funerals; observe the dietary laws; and engage in religious instruction.<sup>10</sup> Teaching the law to one's children was one of the obligations of the covenant.

The biological family plays an important role in Old Testament salvation history. God's promise to Abraham was a promise of many descendants, land, and blessing—the very things any ancient family would want. The purpose of this promise was to bless Abraham's family, through him to bless the whole of Israel, and through Israel to bless all the families of the earth (Gen. 12:1-3). God's promise to David to put a son on his throne who would have an everlasting kingdom was finally fulfilled in the Messiah, who was both David's son and God's. God built David a house, and through that house, he offered a blessing to all households (2 Sam. 7:11-16).

However, God works through families in surprising ways, overturning conventional social expectations to show his sovereignty and his grace. For example, although his promise of blessing descended through family lines, God ignored the customary privilege of the firstborn son to give the blessing to Isaac (Gen. 21:9-13), Jacob (Gen. 25:23; 27:1-29), and Judah (Gen. 49:3-4, 8-12). God granted children to barren women, Sarah and Rebekah, so that the promise might continue (Gen. 21:1-7; 25:21). Despite having chosen the nation of Israel, God also passed the blessing through non-Israelites, including Ruth, a Moabite woman (Ruth 4:13-22), and Rahab, a Canaanite prostitute (Josh. 2:8-14; Mt. 1:5). When the Messiah came, he was born to an unmarried Israelite girl (Mt. 1:18-25; Lk. 2:4-7).



The family also serves as a vehicle of revelation, as the Old Testament writers express God's character and relationship to Israel in family terms. For example, God is often described as the Father of Israel (Is. 64:8; Jer. 31:9) and Israel as his firstborn son (Ex. 4:22; Is. 1:2). He carries Israel like a child during their wilderness wanderings (Deut. 1:31). He remains their Father even when their own families forsake them (Is. 63:16; cf. Ps. 27:10). Sometimes God is pictured in maternal images, giving birth to Israel and nurturing them: "You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you, you forgot the God who gave you birth. The Lord saw it, and was jealous, he spurned his sons and daughters" (Deut. 32:19). Isaiah promises divine comfort to Israel in maternal images: "Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. . . . As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you" (Is. 49:15; 66:13).

The Old Testament also describes God as the divine husband of Israel, his sole wife.<sup>11</sup> The image often occurs when the prophets are criticizing Israel for unfaithfulness. God's wife has committed adultery by violating their covenant and forming relationships with other gods—"a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord" (Jer. 31:32; see also Ezek. 16). The most extensive use of this image is in Hosea. God is also described as the *go'el*, or kinsman-redeemer, who will ransom Israel from exile and free them from their enemies (Jer. 50:33-34).

In the New Testament, the most common concept for family is still the household. The New Testament continues to affirm the biological family. Jesus' teaching against divorce (Mt. 19:3-12) and his broadening of the adultery prohibition to include inner lust (Mt. 5:27-28) support the marriage relationship and strengthen its commitments. Paul teaches that marriage is good and exhorts the Corinthians to marital fidelity and to a remarkable sensitivity and mutuality in their sexual relations in marriage (1 Cor. 6:12-20; 7:1-5, 36-38).

Jesus also affirms parents and children. He heals the children of Jairus, the widow of Nain, and the Syrophenician woman (Mk. 5:22-24, 35-43; 7:24-30; Lk. 7:11-17). He blesses children and welcomes the parents who bring them to him (Mk. 10:13-16; Lk. 18:15-17). He criticizes the Pharisees for abusing the *corban* regulations in order to avoid providing for their parents (Mk. 7:9-13). He even uses children to teach his disciples about the qualities necessary for entering the kingdom of God (Mk. 10:13-16; Lk. 18:15-17).

The New Testament writers continue to support the family as the foundational unit of society. For example, Paul teaches that believers who do not provide for their families have "denied the faith" and are "worse than an

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unbeliever" (1 Tim. 5:4, 8, 16). The household codes of Ephesians, Colossians, 1 Timothy, Titus, and 1 Peter serve to defend the faith against the typical Greco-Roman accusation that Christianity would corrupt households and thereby undermine the foundation of society.<sup>12</sup> In his introduction to the household code, Peter urges his readers: "For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution" (1 Pet. 2:13).

The role of the family in salvation history is fulfilled and brought to completion in Jesus. The genealogies in Matthew and Luke illustrate that he is the promised son of David who will receive the everlasting kingdom (Mt. 1:1-17; Lk. 3:23-38). He is the seed of Abraham, who receives the promised blessing (Gal. 3:16). He is the Beloved, the Elect One of God, in whom all God's promises are fulfilled (Eph. 1:3-14; 2 Cor. 1:20). He initiates the promised new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, but he opens it to everyone who responds to him in faith (Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8-10).

The revelation of God in family terms is continued and deepened in the New Testament. For example, the expression "adulterous generation" in the Gospels carries on the Old Testament idea of God as the husband of his unfaithful people (Mt. 12:39; Mk. 8:38).<sup>13</sup> In the New Testament, however, the marriage image is transferred to Christ and the church. Jesus is the bridegroom, and the church is the bride of Christ, united with him in a spiritual union as intimate as the physical union between husband and wife (Mk. 2:18-20; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:31-32; Rev. 21:2).

Perhaps the most significant development comes in the deeper revelation of the Fatherhood of God. Jesus reveals God as his Father in a special sense and addresses God as "Abba," an Aramaic term of intimate family relationship, similar to "Papa." Jesus invited his disciples to have the same intimacy with God that he had—and that only he could bestow: "All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him" (Mt. 11:27). In the parable of the prodigal son, he pictured God as a loving father reaching out in grace and forgiveness even to a younger son who had dishonored him (Lk. 15:11-32).

In the New Testament, the family again becomes a center of religious life. Jesus announces to the woman of Samaria that worship of God is no longer to be centralized in any particular place, but is now to be conducted anywhere in spirit and in truth (John 4:19-24). Acts and the Epistles record instances of household conversions and baptisms (Cornelius in Acts 10; Lydia in Acts 16; the Philippian jailer in Acts 16; Crispus in Acts 18; Stephanas in 1 Cor. 1:16).

The structure of the early church (house churches) was based on the household (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philemon 1:2).<sup>14</sup> In this context, it was essential that the boundaries of the household be permeable, to admit outsiders into the fellowship.<sup>15</sup> Much of the life of the church took place in households, including evangelism (Acts 5:42), baptism (Acts 16:15), teaching (Acts 20:20), the Lord's Supper (Acts. 2:46), and Christian education (1 Cor. 14:35; Eph. 6:4).<sup>16</sup>

Leadership structures were adapted from family settings.<sup>17</sup> Judging from the requirements in the Pastorals, elders may well have been the heads of households.<sup>18</sup> One difference from the Old Testament experience of household worship is that in the New Testament, the father of the family is not the priest for the family. Now all believers are priests, and Jesus is their high priest, seated at the right hand of God and welcoming them into God's presence (Heb. 10:11-25; 13:10-16; 1 Pet. 2:9-10).

Even more striking changes take place in family and faith because of the breaking in of the kingdom of God in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. For believers, the old group identity of family, clan, tribe, and nation has been superseded by a new primary group identity—that of the kingdom of God. Jesus teaches that allegiance to him and to his kingdom takes precedence over everything else. He declares that the claims of the gospel will disrupt even family loyalties:

Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one's foes will be the members of one's own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. (Mt. 10:34-38; cf. Mic. 7:6)<sup>19</sup>

The Lukan version expresses the radical demand of the gospel in even stronger terms: "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple" (Lk. 14:26).

If the new citizenship of the believer is in the kingdom of God, the new family of the believer is the family of faith. Jesus tells his disciples to expect discord in their former relationships because they have joined a new household, with a new master: "A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the



master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!" (Mt. 10:24-25).<sup>20</sup>

Family images create one of the major New Testament pictures of the church.<sup>21</sup> This is a significant development from the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, God has a house but no household. The term "house of God" (*bet Yahweh*) is used almost exclusively for the Temple (e.g., 1 Kings 8:13, 27; Is. 66:1), not for God's people. God's house is his dwelling place, the place where he can be found.<sup>22</sup> In the New Testament, the Temple is still the house of God (Mt. 12:4), although that house is due to be demolished (Mt. 24:1-2). More importantly, the people of God are now the "house(hold) of God" (*oikos tou theou*) or the "household of faith" (*oikos tes pisteos*).<sup>23</sup> Believers are the house of God in both senses of the word "house": they are the spiritual building or temple in which God dwells (1 Pet. 2:5; cf. 1 Cor. 3:9-17), and they are members of God's household (1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 4:17; Eph. 2:19, using *oikeioi*). Sometimes believers are thought of as servants of God's household (Luke 17:10, using *doulos*, slave, and Romans 14:4, using *oiketes*, house servant). More often believers are God's children, either by rebirth (in John) or by adoption (in Paul).

As God's children, believers are brothers and sisters to Christ and to one another (Heb. 2:11; Mt. 23:8). This was the most common way for early Christians to refer to one another. There was precedent for this practice in Judaism (see Deut. 3:18; 24:7; Ps. 22:22; Rom. 9:3).<sup>24</sup> However, Gentile believers are now brothers and sisters, too, as the letter from the Jerusalem Council makes clear (Acts 15:23). This is what anthropologists like to call fictive kinship—except that the New Testament writers seem not to think that it is fictive at all. A real bond has been created between believers in Christ which is at least as strong as the bonds of blood and marriage. The family of faith is to provide for one another as the surrogate of the biological family (Gal. 6:10; Jas. 2:14-16). The ideal is for the biological family and the family of faith to overlap as much as possible. For this to happen, the biological family must come together around a common allegiance to Jesus.

Paul reinterprets the Old Testament familial understanding of election in terms of the family of faith. He argues that God has always worked through the son of the promise rather than through the biological firstborn. Since Christ is the Son of the promise, all those who belong to Christ are also children of Abraham, "heirs according to the promise" (Rom. 9:6-18; Gal. 3:15-18, 29). The family of Abraham now transcends ethnic boundaries, as its Jewish core has been opened up to include Gentiles. According to Ephesians 2, Gentiles are no



longer "strangers and aliens" but "members of the household of God" (Eph. 2:12-13, 19-20).

The new family of faith lives by new social norms. For instance, it turns the societal hierarchy of shame and honor on its head. Jesus teaches that leadership means servanthood, and those who want to be great must be the slaves of all (Mk. 10:42-45).<sup>25</sup> Paul describes the church not as a hierarchy but as a body with interdependent members. This body gives more honor to those members who lack it, so that all members will have the same care for one another (1 Cor. 12:12-26).

In the new family, the traditional domination of the head of the household in human society has been displaced. Jesus warns his disciples not to give themselves lofty titles and attempt to set themselves above one another: "But do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven" (Mt. 23:8; NASB). In the family of faith, there are mothers, brothers, and sisters, but no fathers, except for God.<sup>26</sup>

The new social norms are expressed most sweepingly in Galatians 3:28. Paul announces that the most basic divisions of the ancient world have been overcome in Christ: those between Jew and Gentile, slave and free, male and female. All three pairs have far-reaching implications for the household of faith. The last two pairs have implications for the biological household, as well. The incorporation of Gentiles indicates that the household of God transcends ethnic divisions. It also opens new opportunities for women and slaves. Perhaps most striking of all, in a culture in which marriage was an unquestioned norm, is the affirmation the NT writers give to single people in the household of faith. Singleness can now be a valid choice for the sake of the kingdom (Matt. 12:25; 19:12; 1 Cor. 7:7-8, 32-35).

What can we conclude from this brief survey? I will venture four suggestions. First, let us uphold the biological family as a place to experience divine blessing. Let us work to build relationships and social structures that will support and strengthen family life. However, let us find ways to do this without stigmatizing those families that do not fit our ideal.

Second, let us recover hospitality. In response to cultural pressures, some parts of the American church have promoted the nuclear family as a haven or fortress that keeps out the values and stresses of the world. However, this means that it also keeps out other people—not only other members of the household of God, but guests and sojourners who might want to join that household. We have not fulfilled God's purpose of blessing until we allow God

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to work through our families to bless other families.

Third, let us take the family of faith seriously as our primary family. This does not mean that every program of the church takes priority over family life. But it does mean that God's call on the family and its members comes first and orders all of life. It also means that should take seriously our responsibility to those without intact families—or those whose biological families were a source of pain rather than blessing. The church could be a healing family to those who don't know what a healthy family is.

Fourth, let us enlarge our idea of the family of faith. In the first century, some of the people of God learned that the family of God was bigger than they thought. To persuade them to let the Gentiles into the family, God had to give Peter a personal vision and strike Paul blind. Where are our blind spots today? Who are our Gentiles? Can we yet say with Paul that the divisions of race, class, and gender he mentions in Galatians 3:28 have been overcome in the household of God?

If we can figure out how to be a truly redemptive family, we will have something very important to share with a fragmented society. May it be so.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>For the definition of "house(hold)," see G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, trans. John T. Willis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974-), s.v. "bayith," by Harry A. Hoffner; and Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), s.v. "oikos," by O. Michel. Hereafter cited as *TDOT* and *TDNT*.

<sup>2</sup>*TDOT*, s.v. "bayith"; *TDNT*, s.v. "oikos"; *ABD*, s.v. "Family"; and *ISBE*, s.v. "Relationships, Family," by N. Isaacs and E. D. Isaacs. On sojourners, see Exodus 23:9; Judges 17:12.

<sup>3</sup>*ISBE*, s.v. "Relationships, Family"; and "Adoption," by T. Rees.

<sup>4</sup>Rodney Clapp, *Families at the Crossroads: Beyond Traditional and Modern Options* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 35; *ABD*, s.v. "Family."

<sup>5</sup>Clapp gives evidence for this conclusion in his survey of the family from biblical times to the postmodern world.

<sup>6</sup>Carol Meyers, "The Family in Early Israel," in *Families in Ancient Israel*, by Leo G. Perdue, Joseph Blenkinsopp, John J. Collins, and Carol Meyers (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1997), 21; and Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, rev. ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 63-73.

<sup>7</sup>Christopher J. H. Wright, *An Eye for an Eye: The Place of Old Testament Ethics Today* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1983), 37.

<sup>8</sup>Wright, 154-55, 168, 185.

<sup>9</sup>ISBE, s.v. "Family"; Colin Brown, ed., *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975-1978), s.v. "Father," by O. Hofius. Hereafter cited as *NIDNTT*.

<sup>10</sup>Arland D. Jacobson, "Divided Families and Christian Origins," in *The Gospel Behind the Gospels: Current Studies on Q*, ed. Ronald A. Piper (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 378.

<sup>11</sup>This implies that monogamy is the ideal, even in the Old Testament, although polygamy is allowed in the law. *ABD*, s.v. "Family."

<sup>12</sup>Meeks, 106.

<sup>13</sup>*NIDNTT*, s.v. "Marriage," by W. Günther.

<sup>14</sup>Meeks argues that the household was the basic model for the early Christian communities. To build on this foundation, they borrowed ideas from the synagogue, the religious association, and the philosophical school as they needed to solve particular problems (84).

<sup>15</sup>John Driver, *Images of the Church in Mission* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1997), 150.

<sup>16</sup>*ABD*, s.v. "Family."

<sup>17</sup>*NIDNTT*, s.v. "Bishop," by L. Coenen.

<sup>18</sup>Elders would normally be male. C. J. H. Wright suggests, however, that female heads of households, like Lydia and Nympha, may have served as elders for the churches that met in their homes. *ABD*, s.v. "Family."

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<sup>19</sup>Ieuan Ellis observes that the apocalyptic tradition speaks of division within families as one of the "messianic woes" that will signal the end. "Jesus and the Subversive Family," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 38 (1985): 176.

<sup>20</sup>A number of scholars over the years have accused Jesus of being anti-family—for example, Ernst Renan, David Strauss, Ferdinand Mount, and Gerd Theissen. See Ellis, 173; and Jacobson, 361. This seems to me to be an over-simplification. Jesus did not reject the biological family, but he placed loyalty to himself and to his kingdom above it. According to Clapp, "Jesus did not expect biological family to be denied or eliminated. He did, however, decenter and relativize it" (78).

<sup>21</sup>Driver, 139.

<sup>22</sup>Wright argues that the term "house of God" is occasionally used in the Old Testament to refer to Israel as the people of God. He cites Numbers 12:7; Jeremiah 12:7; Hosea 8:1; and Micah 4:2 (Wright, 193). Although Michel states that "in the OT, 'my house' refers to Israel itself," he cites only Numbers 12:7, and observes, "The obvious ref. [sic] is to Israel as the possession of God." *TDNT*, s.v. "*oikos*." Since "house" could refer to both the building and its contents, it was used to mean someone's property or possessions. Both Numbers 12:7 and Jeremiah 12:7 refer to Israel as a whole as God's possession; Hosea 8:1 and 9:15 refer to the land of Israel; and Micah 4:2 uses "house" to refer to the mountain of the Lord's Temple. None of these passages uses "house of God" with its New Testament sense of God's household or family. Goetzmann argues that the only Old Testament verse that lies behind the New Testament understanding of "house of God" as "people of God" is Numbers 12:7 (quoted in Hebrews 3:2, 5), but even this verse refers to the land as a whole, not to the people as the household of God. "All the statements about the house of God remain firmly attached to the earthly sanctuary." *NIDNTT*, s.v. "House," by J. Goetzmann.

<sup>23</sup>This understanding of the house of God in Old and New Testaments is confirmed by *ISBE*, s.v. "House of God" and "Household," by E. H. Palmer.

<sup>24</sup>Meeks, 87; *NIDNTT*, s.v. "Brother," by W. Günther.

<sup>25</sup>Driver, 145.

<sup>26</sup>Driver, 144. Meeks observes that the egalitarian tendencies of the Christian movement would have created tensions within households because they challenged the traditional authority of the head of the household (76).

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Wright, Christopher J. H. *An Eye for an Eye: The Place of Old Testament Ethics Today*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1983.

## Re-writing "Household" in the Early Church

David A. deSilva, Ph.D.

People will often come to a pastor for marital counseling because a crisis has arisen in their relationship or because the relationship has reached the breaking point. Very few pastors have the luxury of meeting with couples because the latter simply feel a desire for "marriage enrichment," or want to explore ways in which they can strengthen their marriage and stave off trouble down the road. Because of the increasing fragility of marriage — as much among Christians as among the unchurched — it seems prudent to give a prominent place to the preventative work of forming a wholesome and life-giving understanding of marriage from the pulpit and within Christian education as well as the remedial work of bringing couples in crisis to a point where they can re-invent their relationship on the basis of God's love for each of the pair. What heartache, what tension, what strife could be prevented by helping people form a solid, biblical understanding of their marriage covenant while the seas are calm and the horizons unclouded! So I would urge Christian leaders, in their work with married couples, to let that biblical understanding drive their ministry to them, and not to wait for crises to arise to begin to lay such a foundation.

Obviously, one important component of such a vision for marriage is the question of how husbands and wives are encouraged to relate to one another, and on what basis. Here, too many people — usually males — are already "experts" on the matter. "My wife is supposed to submit to me, not give me trouble! It says so in the Bible. Look at Ephesians 5:22!" Even Paul grounds the model of a hierarchical marriage in the creation account of Genesis 2, though the creation story itself gives no hint of moving in this direction. Nevertheless, many husbands come to the pastor's office or to the pew harboring a basic idea that God wants his wife to do as he says, angered by her stubborn refusal to submit to him and to please him.

Now it is well known that ancient ethicists prized the model of the hierarchical household, with the husband/father/master exercising authority over the other members of the household.<sup>1</sup> Aristotle held this to be inherent in the nature of the two genders, just as it was inherent in human nature to mate in the first place (*Politics* 1.2 1252a25-32). The male was "natural ruler" and the female "natural subject." Greco-Roman authors especially were careful to qualify the nature of the husband's authority over his wife. While the father's rule over children and slaves

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was absolute (Aristotle likened it to a monarch's power), the husband's rule over his wife was more like "constitutional rule," in which the citizens are equal in essence, but different in power (*Pol.* 1.12 1259b6-10). Plutarch agrees: "Every action performed in a good household is done by the agreement of the partners, but displays the leadership and decision of the husband" (Plutarch, "Advice on Marriage" 11). Jewish authors were more sweeping in their claims about the relationship of husband and wife. Josephus, for example, passes down the following instruction: "The woman, says the law, is in all things inferior to the man [a claim not made, by the way, by Greek and Latin authors]. Let her accordingly be submissive, not for her humiliation, but that she may be directed, for the authority has been given by God to the man" (Josephus, *Against Apion* 2.199; LCL).

Given this ideal of household management, it is not surprising to find the ideal wife depicted as someone who is submissive to the husband, who stands behind her man if not by him. This submissiveness is represented in several ways. First, the ideal wife is silent in public. Plutarch reflects this in his advice to a young couple in the 2<sup>nd</sup>-century AD: "A wife should speak only to her husband or through her husband, and should not feel aggrieved if, like a piper, she makes nobler music through another's tongue" (Plutarch, "Advice on Marriage" 32). The words of an honorable woman, like her very body, must never become public property: "she should be shy with her speech as with her body, and guard it against strangers" ("Advice on Marriage" 31). Second, she keeps herself as much as possible to the private spaces of the home, an arrangement legitimated on the basis of the superior physical strength of males and the nurturing gifts of females in Xenophon (*Oeconomicus* 7.16-41). Third, she is modest and chaste, providing legitimate children for the household and giving the husband no occasion to be disgraced by another male. As a final sign of her submission to her husband and embeddedness in him, a wife is to share her husband's religion. "A wife ought not to have friends of her own, but use her husband's as their common stock. And the first and most important of our friends are the gods. A married woman should therefore worship and recognize the gods whom her husband holds dear, and these alone. The door must be closed to strange cults and foreign superstition. No god takes pleasure in cult performed furtively and in secret by a woman" (Plutarch, "Advice on Marriage" 19). In sum, this is the epitaph for the perfect wife: "I was chaste and modest; I did not know the crowd; I was faithful to my husband .... He, through my diligent performance of duty, flourished at all times."<sup>2</sup>

When we come to the New Testament, we might easily think that the early church leaders simply baptized these family arrangements as God's eternally valid design for the family. In so doing, we might be challenged by the words of Jesus



that Dr. Colijn brings to our attention in her paper, where there are no "fathers" in the family formed around Jesus, but only brothers and sisters and mothers (Mk 3:32-35) united to One Father — a name that none of us dare assume in Jesus' re-invented household (Mt 23:8). But perhaps that need not trouble the hierarchalist long, since the words of Paul and the other apostolic voices are so clear on the subject.

But are they so clear? Even as they help the church adapt to the realities of life within the structures of the Greco-Roman society (to a growing extent, seeking to fulfill the ideals of that society so as to reduce the tension between church and society, as in Titus 2:5, where young women are taught, among other things, to "be submissive to their husbands, so that the word of God may not be discredited"), are they not also bringing live-giving transformation to those structures?<sup>3</sup>

This possibility is hardly welcomed by all Christians. Indeed, I am struck, as I read some of the principal texts (e.g., the household codes in Ephesians or 1 Peter) in the Greek and compare this with available English translations, by the tendency of translators and editors to help the old structures remain secure, and to neutralize the leaven of the good news in this sphere. Consider a frequently-encountered editorial phenomenon surrounding the household codes in Ephesians 5:21-6:9. The author of Ephesians has used an injunction to mutual submission (Eph 5:21) as the general introduction to the household codes, an obvious and distinctively Christian modification of the model of the husband as a dominant and the wife as a submissive partner. Eph 5:21 and 5:22 are grammatically inseparable, since the former actually provides the verb for the latter. The editors of the New International Version and the Holman Christian Standard Bible insert a paragraph heading between Eph 5:21 and Eph 5:22, an insertion that serves ideological goals rather than grammatical clarity. The heading exists simply because these editors find the biblical text as it stands to challenge the hierarchical household they hold too dear. The NRSV, NJB, and NLB all follow a better path here, placing a paragraph heading prior to 5:21, which is clearly intended in the Greek text to govern the household codes that follow.

Embedding the cultural ideal of a wife's submissiveness in the new, Christian injunction to submit to one another in relationships was revolutionary; but the author of Ephesians goes further when he presents the relationship between Christ and the Church as the model for husband-wife relationships. Even while this model reinforces the submissiveness of the wife, it so radically reshapes the "authority" of the husband as to make it unrecognizable to the husband whose wrote the epitaph for his wife: "He, through my diligent performance of duty, flourished at

all times." Now the husband is to give away his life for the building up and nurture of his wife, helping her to find herself in God and discover all the riches that are hers in Christ. Now the husband, through diligent performance of his duty in Christ, is to make her flourish at all times, even as Christ came not to be served, but to serve (Mark 10:45). The author of Ephesians, though preserving the form of a hierarchical relationship, nevertheless confounds the dominant's culture's understanding of the implications of hierarchy by introducing the model of the Lord who is Servant (Mk 10:41-45; John 13:1-17).

Translations of 1 Peter 3:7 provide another example of domesticating the New Testament's domestic codes, though perhaps not as blatant as the paragraph heading removing Ephesians 5:21 from the discussion of mutual marital obligations in Christ. The Greek reads: Οἱ ἄνδρες ὁμοίως, συνοικοῦντες κατὰ γνώσιν ὡς ἀσθενεστέρω σκεύει τῷ γυναικείῳ, ἀπονέμοντες τιμὴν ὡς καὶ συγκληρονόμοις χάριτος ζωῆς. Consider these translations:

KJV "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life..."

NIV "Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life..."

NRSV "Husbands, in the same way, show consideration for your wives in your life together, paying honor to the woman as the weaker sex, since they too are also heirs of the gracious gift of life..."

NASV "You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow-heir of the grace of life..."

With the exception of the NASV, all these translations suggest that husbands honor the wives, in part at least, as the weaker vessel, suggesting a certain condescension in the act of honoring a wife, before bringing in the statement about the wife being an equal heir. The author's syntax, readily apparent in the Greek, however, points to the woman's relative frailty as the motive for the husband's being considerate in his dealings with her (rather than being domineering or taking advantage of his natural advantages). The woman's status in God's family as a fellow-heir of the

"gift of life," however, provides the sole rationale for the husband's honoring her.<sup>4</sup> Such honor is presented not as a generous act of a patronizing husband, but as the wife's due given her dignity in God's family.

Now why dwell on this? The author of 1 Peter is speaking in unison with the philosophical ethicists of his day when he urges that the relative physical strength of husband and wife become an occasion for consideration and gentleness rather than exploitation or contempt. Would that all Christians lived up simply to the standards set by pagan philosophers! The author goes beyond them, however, when he insists that Christian husbands honor their wives as "fellow heirs of the grace of life" (1 Pet 3:7). Notice what the author has done. Who are "fellow heirs," except siblings? The author has introduced the harmonious and egalitarian relationship of siblings, sister and brother, into the model for Christian marriage as the ultimate basis for that relationship, since it is an eternal basis. This stands in considerable tension with the hierarchical model of husband and wife taught in the culture. The model of "fellow heirs," hence sibling relations, make co-operation as partners the dominant mode in the Christian household, rather than the female's submission to the male.

In both Ephesians and 1 Peter, then, I find the authors to be introducing far more radical material into their representation of the relationship of husband and wife than the simple, hierarchical model can embrace and embody. Yet embodying Christ and Christ-likeness is central to the call of every Christian. Focusing on cultivating the mind of Christ towards the spouse — and one is hard-pressed to find "insisting on submission" in Philippians 2:1-11, though mutual submission is certainly taught there — is at the heart of every healthy marriage, the fulfillment of the Christian marriage covenant. Learning to live with your husband as your brother in Christ, your wife as your sister in Christ, and teaching your congregations how to do the same, points the way forward to learning how truly to love one another as Christ loved us. It also replaces a model for marriage that frequently bears the bitter fruit of the suppression of the yearnings and growth of one member for the advantage or security or ego of the other, fruit that poisons all who eat from the common table in that household, both the couple and the children.

1 Peter 3:7 provides us with a smooth segue into the second topic, which is the manner in which the early Christian leaders sought to infuse relationships between Christians with the ethos of kinship, specifically of siblings.<sup>5</sup>

Dr. Colijn develops the idea that Jesus and the apostles regarded the church as a family related by the blood of Jesus and by adoption by God. I want to spell out just one of the many implications of their explicit choice of sibling relationships as the model for relationships within the church and the ethos those



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relationships are to manifest.

Both Jewish and Greco-Roman ethicists promoted a well-articulated ideal of *philadelphia*, the "love of sisters and brothers." This "love" should manifest itself in:

- ✠ cooperation with, rather than competition against, one another;
- ✠ mutual trust, based on the premise that siblings would cooperate with one another for each other's good at all times;
- ✠ harmony and unity, manifested in the sharing of ideals and the sharing of possessions;
- ✠ a commitment to forgiveness, reconciliation, patience, and hiding one another's shame.

From this list, I would focus on sharing possessions as a prime manner in which New Testament authors urged believers to let the love and kinship of the Christian family become "real." "How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action" (1 Jn 3:16-18).

Among Greco-Roman ethicists, since friends were held to "own all things in common" (Aristotle, *Nic. Eth.* 1159b31-32), the same was all the more to be expected of close kin. Brothers are "to use in common a father's wealth and friends and slaves" (Plutarch, "On Fraternal Affection" 1 [*Moralia* 478C-D]). Children dividing an inheritance were urged to allow one another to take what is preferable and suitable to each, considering that "it is the care and administration of the estate that is being distributed, but that its use and ownership is left unassigned and undistributed for them all in common" ("On Fraternal Affection" 11 [*Moralia* 483D]). To out-manoeuvre a brother out of something he treasured is to gain a trifle but lose "the greatest and most valuable part of their inheritance, a brother's friendship and confidence" (*Moralia* 483E). With regard to the family estate, they are to "abolish, if possible, the notion of 'mine' and 'not mine'" ("On Fraternal Affection" 12 [*Moralia* 484B]).

The conviction that siblings were to make use in common of their inherited goods undergirds the exhortation to "benefit" and "share with" one another within the Christian community (Heb 13:16; cf. 6:9-10; 10:24-25). Lucian, though scornful of the Christian movement, nevertheless bears witness that this attitude was thoroughly established among Christians by the second century: "their first lawgiver persuaded them that they are all brothers of one another.... Therefore they little esteem their material goods and consider them common property" ("On the



Passing of Peregrinus" 13). As siblings in Christ, the believers are to pool their resources in every way so that every member of the family knows the love of this family at his or her point of need and so that all arrive safely at the heavenly goal. The picture of the earliest community of disciples painted by Luke is one in which the ideal of friendship is fully lived out: "no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common" (Acts 4:32). As the need to care for the poor in their midst made itself felt, the Christians of means would sell their houses and lands, and bring the proceeds to the apostles for distribution (Acts 4:34-35).

The aversion of democratic and socialist countries to communism need not dull our appreciation of this picture: what we witness in the early church is not an attempt to create a system of government and economics enforced through terror, but rather an attitude that each believer has toward his or her fellows — "love for the brothers and sisters" — and lives out without reservation. The realization of kinship through the sharing of possessions continues in the famous collection project for the poor in the Judean churches (Acts 11:29), which is also a prominent topic of Paul's letters as he actually carries out that project, a project that also bears witness to the Christians' commitment to their family abroad, as it were.

A major venue for the sharing of possessions was hospitality (see, for example, Rom 12:13b; 2 Tim 1:16; Tit 1:8; Heb 13:2; 1 Pet 4:9; 3 John 5-10), an important expression of the love of believers one for another, a living out of the ethos of kinship within the trans-local Christian community. In the words of Edwin Hatch, "Christianity was, and grew because it was, a great fraternity. The name 'brother'... vividly expressed a real fact.... a Christian found, wherever he went, in the community of his fellow-Christians a welcome and hospitality."<sup>vi</sup>

Missionaries, itinerant teachers, and leaders of the movement were especially dependent on the hospitality of their fellow-believers along the way (3 Jn 5-8; 1 Cor 16:5-6; Philem 22). Hospitality was also necessary for the very existence of the group, since the houses of the better-endowed believers became the meeting places for local Christian communities (See Rom 16:3-5, 23; 1 Cor 16:19; Col 4:15; Phlm 2; 1 Pet 4:9).

Recovering the "love of sisters and brothers," especially manifested in sharing possessions and hospitality, is essential for the church's ability to meet the desperate needs of Christians in urban settings that lack family and resources, to make disciples of children who lack any consistent parental presence in their lives, to rescue families from situations of domestic violence, and to help families and individuals move from homelessness back to stability. The relief efforts of local congregations and global boards do not substitute for the personal involvement of

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individuals and families in extending God's gifts to their sisters and brothers — the means by which the "family of God" becomes real to all parties concerned. However, if we want to pursue the vision of Jesus and the apostles for the church and indeed become the arm of healing and restoration God yearns for us to become, we cannot try to work out how to fit these values into our lives. We need rather to work out what our lives need to look like in order to make room for these values — which really means, to make room for these *people*.

The Mediterranean villa was ideally suited to living out the value of hospitality. Much of the home was actually devoted to "public" space, where guests would be entertained, clients received, visitors lodged, even businesses or trades practiced, with "private" spaces in the back end of the house or the second floor. How does the architecture of our homes lend itself to hospitality? Have we organized our houses, perhaps selected our houses, perhaps even built our houses in such a way that makes spaces for the family of God, whether a guest suite for a family in transition, a small workshop for an unemployed person getting back on his or her feet, a common area for Christians from your church and seekers from your community to meet regularly and interact?

Hospitality is a matter not only of space but also of time. Do you leave margins in your schedule, making room there for those people God will bring into your life — or those people whom God will lead you to seek out — to mentor, to invest yourself in, to give a share in your inheritance of spiritual formation, practical wisdom, and emotional stability? Have you set your lifestyle expectations at such a level that you and your spouse are not working three jobs, but have learned to be content more with having time to build up the sisters and brothers than with having enough money to sustain a bloated evaluation of what is "necessary" for a stable home?

As we continue to expand our view of "household" from the nuclear family of the industrial West to the community of faith bound together by the blood of Jesus, our attention goes to the hospitality of our local churches as well. Does our church provide a community in which people can find their identity and grow into their vocation after generations on welfare? Does it seek out and invite such people to come experience the hospitality of the church? Does it provide a community in which the young who have had no father in their lives, or whose experience of "mother" has been wounding, can experience being nurtured by older brothers and sisters in Christ? Does it provide a community of redemption for those in any kind of distress, rather than acting as a self-protective community that reinforces the experience of exclusion and rejection?

These are a few of the questions we might ask of ourselves and our

congregations, as we think about how to "make room" in our lives, our homes, and our congregations for the family of God, and as we move from the sin of "mine" and even of "ours" to the faithful stewardship of God's resources for all those whom God would touch through us.

**For further reading:**

Aristotle, *Nicomachian Ethics*, Books VIII and IX

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Plutarch, "On Affection for Offspring."

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Plutarch, "On Fraternal Affection."

Plutarch, "Advice on Marriage."

Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*.

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<sup>1</sup> See further David Balch, *Let Wives Be Submissive: The Domestic Code in 1 Peter* (SBLMS 26; Missoula, MN: Scholars Press, 1981); David A. deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 178-85.

<sup>2</sup> Cited in Russ Dudrey, "'Submit Yourselves to One Another': A Socio-historical Look at the Household Code of Ephesians 5:15-6:9," *Restoration Quarterly* 41 (1999) 27-44, p. 34.

<sup>3</sup> See further deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity*, 226-37, as well as Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1997).

<sup>4</sup> This is often correctly observed in critical commentaries, as in J. H. Elliott, *1 Peter* (Anchor Bible 37B; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 578-80; Paul Achtemeier, *1 Peter* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 205-206. See also the discussion of this verse in Steven Bechtler, *Following in His Steps: Suffering, Community and Christology in 1 Peter* (SBLDS 162; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 174-76.

<sup>5</sup> For a fuller treatment of the ethos of sibling relationships in the ancient world, and its adaptation within the fictive kinship group of the church, see deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity*, 165-173, 212-225.

<sup>6</sup> Elliott, *Home for the Homeless*, 146, citing Edwin Hatch, *The Organization of the Early Christian Churches* (Oxford and Cambridge: Rivingtons, 1881), 43-44.



## Family Structure

by Eugene S. Gibbs\*

Many Evangelical Christians have become champions of what they call the “traditional,” or “biblical,” or even “natural” family. They take this to mean a husband, a wife, and 2.1 children: a nuclear family. James Davidson Hunter believes it has become for them “...a symbol of stability and traditional moral virtue”(quoted in Clapp 1993, 10). These virtues are especially found in the ideal of lifelong faithful monogamy, bread-winning fathers, stay-at-home-with-children mothers, no premarital sex, and heterosexuality. Tim LaHaye in *Battle for the Family*, James Dobson and Gary Bauer in *Children at Risk: The Battle for the Hearts and Minds of Our Kids*, and Pat Robertson in a chapter in *The New Millennium* entitled “The Assault on the Family” all project the nuclear family, along with U.S.-style capitalism, as the biblical model for Christian families and also as the foundation of historic America (cited in Clapp 1993, 10). Evangelist James Robison relates faith and nuclear family to the “American way of life” (quoted in Clapp 1993, 11).

While many Christians might support some of these ideals as virtues, in fact the nuclear family as we know it, in the main is a product of Germanic westward invasions between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries that broke up the Roman household (*familia*) into more independent peasant agriculture as a basic unit of economic production (Brundage 1987).

During the period of feudalism the households of the nobility grew to great size, sometimes numbering in the hundreds. They included relatives, allies, and servants. Also a wife might have six to eight children (Bresc 1996). Even peasant marriages took place only after much deliberation by the feudal lords, as the household was the major unit of economic production. The heads of household of both the prospective husband and wife had to determine what the new alliance between the two kinship groups brought about by the marriage would bring for the advancement of both (Fosssier 1996).

By the twelfth century often only one son was allowed to marry and carry on a noble lineage (Quale 1988). Children were perceived to belong to that lineage rather than to the mother. The kinship group grew in importance and independently arranged marriages were discouraged (de La Ronciere 1988).

With the colonization of North America the extended or augmented household became the norm. This started with a nuclear family, but expanded to

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meet the needs of the community. What we might call "families" functioned as schools, vocational institutes, Christian formation centers, houses of correction, welfare institutions, poorhouses, orphanages, and hospitals (Demos 1970). Every household had to adjust to the needs of the larger community. Since this was so critical for the good of the community, it was deemed proper for the local government to intervene if a household failed in its duty. The household included everyone living under the same roof. After 1640 house size began to accommodate to these household expansions (Demos 1970).

While the first colonies were male dominated, women had a vital role. They could hold property and pass on an inheritance. They could make legal contracts, a right which had been denied them in England. Widows could insist on prenuptial contracts to protect themselves and their children. Wives had, by law, to be consulted in the sale of property. In these cases a wife was considered an equal partner in the marriage. Even liquor licenses were sometimes granted to single women, usually widows, almost never to single men (Demos 1970).

In the pre-Civil War decades families began adjusting to the industrial revolution. While the nuclear structure was beginning to be seen as basic, it was actually varied in several ways. Many families were aggregates of kinship groups. Some were childless couples, some surviving spouses with children (single-parent families), some combined grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews and nieces. The more affluent included domestic servants within the family unit. The less affluent could include paying boarders (Wallace 1978).

By 1855 a mill culture began to grow in the U.S., facilitating the change of families from being primarily a unit of production to being a unit of consumption based on wage earning. This continued for a hundred years, going from 46% of the labor force in agriculture in 1850 down to only 12% in 1950 (Kain 1900, 34. Quoted in Garland, 1999). Industrialization requires a mobile work force, one that can move to follow the jobs. The need for a work force increased and varied as the American west opened up to mining, meat packing, and manufacturing. Since mobile workers must travel light, too large a household is hard to move, and the available jobs might be open to only one member of the family, extended families became the exception in order to accommodate mobility. The model of preference became the limited nuclear family. Since it was no longer needed for economic production, became centered on sentiment, support, protection, and consumption (Goldscheiter and Waite 1991). These are the exact qualities exemplified in the English, Victorian middle class family. Father worked, preferably in a profession (remember all those 1950-60 sitcoms where Dad would come home from the office) and mother would manage the household and direct the domestic help. Upper class

Americans sought to emulate this pattern, followed in their desire by the growing middle class. Soon even lower class families saw this as the ideal, though perhaps hard to fulfill (Lasch 1980, Hall 1990). This Victorian family structure became identified as the ideal, and by mid-20<sup>th</sup> century its very recent origins had been forgotten.

Family structure has changed over the centuries in response to social and economic demands. None of its structures can be rightly called "natural" or "biblical" since the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments contain various structures. Most structures arose in response to social and economic, and sometimes religious, needs.

The main exception to this Victorian structure is found in the African-American tradition. Since slaves were forbidden to marry during much of the slave era in America, the broader African-American community took on a strong inclusiveness. In the 50 years ending in 1864 slightly less than 49% of slaves lived in families consisting of a married couple and their children (Malone 1992, 17). After the Civil War former slaves were not allowed the financial means to be able to move toward the Victorian model, and so very few could afford to do so. The community, and in many cases the church, were the institutions that provided support and guidance for former slave families. Often these households were deemed by the dominant culture as matriarchal. This comes from the tradition that a child born to a slave mother was a slave regardless of whether the father was a slave. Only in the last few decades has this community and church support begun to break down. Structures of many kinds met the needs of these families (Coontz 1988, Cody 1983). This is beginning to emerge again.

What some Evangelical writers insist is the biblical or natural or only structure for Christian families in reality is a response to a specific social need and changing economic conditions. This model has become envisioned as an ideal, though it was only begun by the English middle class and copied by affluent Americans. Insistence on this model has made some of those Christians who cannot pursue the limited nuclear structure feel that they cannot have a truly "Christian family". They believe that they are only second-class, or of less value in the eyes of the church. In reality what makes a family "Christian" cannot be defined by its structure alone.

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## **A Parable of Calvinism**

Brenda B. Colijn

One of the issues raised by the current debate over the openness of God is what kind of God is required by the different theologies involved in the debate. For example, Reformed theologian Bruce Ware has described the God of open theism as a "limited, passive, hand-wringing God."<sup>1</sup> Open theist Clark Pinnock cites Walter Kasper's description of the God of classical theism as "a solitary narcissistic being, who suffers from his own completeness."<sup>2</sup> If nothing else, open theism has forced evangelicals to reexamine their understanding of the nature and character of God.

I approach the doctrine of God from an Anabaptist perspective, which technically is not Arminian (since Anabaptism predated the Arminian controversy within the Reformed tradition) but is decidedly non-Calvinist. From an Anabaptist perspective, the God of Reformed theology suffers from significant limitations, although those limitations apply to his character rather than to his knowledge. Even if one agrees with Calvinists (as most Anabaptists and Arminians would) that God has exhaustive definite foreknowledge, the Calvinist understanding of salvation has significant implications for the character of God that are not often brought out. Let me illustrate this with a parable.

The kingdom of God is like a cruise ship that goes on a long voyage. The captain of the ship overhears his passengers planning to go swimming off the side of the ship. He makes an announcement to all the passengers, warning them against such an action. If they jump off the ship, they will be unable to climb back in, because the hull is too steep and there are no ladders to give access. The ship is hundreds of miles from land, so they won't be able to swim to shore. The surrounding waters are infested with sharks. Nevertheless, despite the captain's warnings, all of the passengers jump overboard to go swimming. They are soon in deep trouble.

Seeing their distress, the captain broadcasts a message to all of them. He says that he can rescue them all; to be rescued, all they need to do is to grab the life preservers that he will throw to them. Then he takes out a few life preservers and instructs his crew to throw them to certain individual passengers he has picked out. For the other passengers, he does nothing. He continues to broadcast his message that they need only to grab the life preservers in order to be rescued. Some of the people with life preservers beg him to help the passengers who are drowning. The captain ignores them. With his message of rescue still sounding across the water, he watches the rest of the passengers die.

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When asked why he didn't rescue the others, he says that they all deserved to die, and they should be grateful that he chose to save any of them.

What would we think of a captain who did these things? This is a parable of Calvinism, and the cruise ship captain is the Calvinist God. All orthodox Christians believe that human beings are in danger of eternal death because of sin, and their only hope is to be rescued by God. God provides this rescue through the work of Christ (the atonement). No one can be rescued unless God takes the initiative, reaches out to them with the offer of rescue, and enables them to receive it.

But Calvinists and non-Calvinists differ in their understanding of God's intentions and actions regarding the rescue. Anabaptists and Arminians believe that God desires to rescue everyone, invites everyone to be rescued, and enables everyone who hears the invitation to respond. People may accept or reject the invitation. Calvinists, however, believe that God issues two different invitations—a "general call" that invites everyone to be rescued (to which people are powerless to respond) and a "special" or "effectual" call addressed to certain individuals (which enables them to respond and ensures that they will). He then damns all those to whom he did not give the effectual call. The prayers of God's people have no effect on this plan that God has established from eternity.<sup>3</sup> The "general call" to respond to the gospel is technically not a lie, since anyone who does respond is saved.<sup>4</sup> However, it is certainly deceptive, because it withholds critical information and misleads people about God's real intentions.<sup>5</sup> It implies that everyone can respond, when in fact they cannot. It also implies that God wants everyone to be rescued, when in fact he wants many of them to die.<sup>6</sup> The distinction between the general call and the special, effectual call means that Calvinists must posit a secret will of God that is at variance with God's will revealed in the gospel.<sup>7</sup>

Of course, there are different versions of Calvinism that would require slightly different versions of the parable. In the supralapsarian version of the parable, the captain plans the cruise precisely in order to play out the drowning scenario. In fact, he selects most of the people for the passenger list because he wants to kill them. In the infralapsarian version, the captain learns about the passengers' plans after he has scheduled the cruise. Knowing their plans, he takes along only enough life preservers for those individuals that he has decided to save. In the sublapsarian version, the captain takes along enough life preservers for all the passengers, but he plans not to use most of them.<sup>8</sup>

Thus far, the parable has assumed that the passengers have ended up in the water because of their own free choices. However, if the Calvinist view of God's exhaustive controlling sovereignty is correct—that is, if Calvin is right



that God causes all things<sup>9</sup>—then the captain of the cruise ship actually throws his passengers in the water himself and stocks the water with sharks.<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, according to Calvin's own perspective, the captain intentionally gives some of the drowning passengers faulty life preservers. They cling to them gratefully, thinking they are safe, only to find that after a while the life preservers deflate and they drown. According to a passage in Calvin's *Institutes*, some of the reprobate experience a "lower working of the Spirit" by which God grants them a sense of his goodness and favor and even gives them the gift of reconciliation, so that they think they're among the elect. But God never regenerates them. After a while he withdraws from them, allows the light of his grace to be extinguished, and damns them. God does this "to render them more convicted and inexcusable."<sup>11</sup> Wesley dubs this notion "damning grace," because God's intention in bestowing blessings on the reprobate is to increase their condemnation.<sup>12</sup>

It might be objected that the cruise ship parable makes the passengers seem too innocent. After all, human beings are in rebellion against God and are God's enemies. So let's change the parable. . . .

Two countries are at war with one another. The captain of a destroyer has been patrolling an area of the ocean where he knows an enemy submarine has been sighted. He knows that this submarine would destroy his ship if given the chance. However, he comes upon the crew of the enemy submarine in the water amid the wreckage of their ship, which has been destroyed through their own incompetence. The captain has his enemies in his power. Although he has the time and resources to rescue them all, he tells his crew to pick a certain few of them out of the water, and he watches the rest drown. What would we think of a captain who did this? Under the terms of the Geneva Convention, he could be tried as a war criminal.

Reformed theologians will often say that we cannot judge God's behavior by our own ideas of right and wrong.<sup>13</sup> God's will determines what is good, so whatever he does or commands is good by definition.<sup>14</sup> Since God is the sovereign of the universe, no one can call him to account.<sup>15</sup> His ways, after all, are not our ways (Isa. 55:8-9). The clay has no right to question the potter (Rom. 9:20).

However, Scripture has not left this avenue open to us. We are repeatedly called to model our ethics on the character and behavior of God, especially as exemplified in Jesus Christ. "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 11:45; NRSV). "Consider what you are doing, for you judge not on behalf of human beings but on the Lord's behalf; he is with you in giving judgment. Now, let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take care what you do, for there is no

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perversion of justice with the Lord our God, or partiality, or taking of bribes" (2 Chr. 19:7). "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). "But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36). "Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another" (John 13:34). "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1). "Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us, and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Eph. 4:31-5:2). "Whoever says, 'I abide in him,' should walk just as he walked" (1 John 2:6). Isaiah observes that God's ways are not our ways precisely because God will show mercy and will abundantly pardon (Isa. 55:6-7). God teaches Jeremiah at the potter's house that he shapes his behavior toward his people in accordance with their response to him (Jer. 18:5-11). God takes no delight in the death of the wicked (Ezek. 33:11). If God calls us to model our ethics on his and then doesn't follow his own rules, how can we trust him in anything?

The God of Calvinism has a secret will that contradicts his revealed will. He commands one thing and then does the opposite himself. He practices deception in his announcement of the gospel message. He derives equal glory from the redemption of the elect and the damnation of the reprobate. Calvin's God even likes to toy with the reprobate before damning them.

By contrast, Anabaptists believe that the character and plan of God are revealed most fully in his son Jesus Christ. As sixteenth-century Anabaptist Pilgram Marpeck observes: "God is a God of order and not of disorder, and He has firmly united His own omnipotence to His will and order. It is not as the predestinarians and others say, without any discrimination, that God has the right to all salvation and damnation. He has, certainly, but not outside of His order and will, to which His power is subordinated. . . . [One should not] preach the power and omnipotence of God outside the order of God's Word. . . . For God Himself is the wisest order in and through His Word, that is, Jesus Christ His only begotten from eternity."<sup>16</sup> The question is not what God can do or what God has the right to do, but what God has chosen to do. As Marpeck states, God has chosen to reveal his plan of salvation in Jesus Christ. The God revealed in Christ has acted in love toward the world to offer new life to everyone who believes (John 3:16). Which captain would you rather have at the helm of the universe?

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Bruce A. Ware, *God's Lesser Glory: The Diminished God of Open Theism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2000), 216.

<sup>2</sup> Clark H. Pinnock, *Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 6; citing Walter Kasper, *The God of Jesus Christ* (New York: Crossroad, 1984), 306.

<sup>3</sup> John Wesley proposes a similar parable. Addressing Calvinists, he notes: "You suppose [God] to be standing at the prison-doors, having the keys thereof in his hands, and to be continually inviting the prisoners to come forth, commanding them to accept of that invitation, urging every motive which can possibly induce them to comply with that command; adding the most precious promises, if they obey, the most dreadful threatenings, if they obey not; and all this time you suppose him to be unalterably determined in himself never to open the doors for them! even while he is crying, 'Come ye, come ye, from that evil place: For why will ye die, O house of Israel!' . . . Alas! my brethren, what kind of sincerity is this, which you ascribe to God our Saviour?" John Wesley, "Predestination Calmly Considered," in *The Works of John Wesley* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1872), 10:227.

<sup>4</sup> John Calvin argues that the gospel promises are extended to everyone who has faith—and God gives faith only to those individuals he has predestined for salvation. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols., ed. John T. McNeill (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 3.24.17.

<sup>5</sup> Some Calvinists believe that the church should follow God's lead in deception and publicly preach "whosoever will" while privately teaching unconditional particular election. Bruce Demarest calls this the "biblical differentiation" between "kerygmatic universality" and "didactic particularity." *The Cross and Salvation* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997), 142, using terms from Paul K. Jewett, *Election and Predestination* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 118. Calvin himself seems to advocate preaching both the universal call and the doctrine of unconditional particular election: "Christ commands us to believe in him. Yet when he says, 'No one can come to me unless it has been granted him by my Father' [John 6:65], his statement is neither false nor contrary to his command. Let preaching, then, take its course that it may lead men to faith, and hold them fast in perseverance with continuing profit. And yet let not the knowledge of predestination be hindered, in order that those who obey may not be proud as of something of their own but may glory in the Lord" (*Institutes*, 3.23.13). However, Calvin cautions against preaching reprobation publicly because it could encourage wickedness (3.23.14).



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<sup>6</sup> Calvinists seem to believe that God's glory would be diminished if he should offer salvation to everyone and give everyone the opportunity to respond. Calvin argues that God has predestined the reprobate to damnation so that they will "glorify his name by their own destruction" (*Institutes* 3.23.6; see also 3.24.14). Apparently God must damn some people in order to show that he can.

<sup>7</sup> In his comment on 2 Peter 3:9, which says that God is unwilling for anyone to perish, Calvin states: "But it may be asked, If God wishes none to perish, why is it that so many do perish? To this my answer is, that no mention is here made of the hidden purpose of God, according to which the reprobate are doomed to their own ruin, but only of his will as made known to us in the gospel. For God there stretches forth his hand without a difference to all, but lays hold only of those, to lead them to himself, whom he has chosen before the foundation of the world." *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, ed. and trans. John Owen, Christian Classics Ethereal Library edition; available from [http://www.ccel.org/c/calvin/comment3/comm\\_vol45/htm/vii.iv.iii.htm](http://www.ccel.org/c/calvin/comment3/comm_vol45/htm/vii.iv.iii.htm); Internet; accessed 1 November 2003.

<sup>8</sup> In supralapsarian Calvinism, God's decree to save some and damn others takes priority over his decree to create the world. He therefore creates the reprobate precisely in order to damn them for eternity. In infralapsarian Calvinism, God's decree to save some logically follows his decrees to create the world and permit the fall. He chooses some to save and leaves the rest to their damnation. He provides atonement in Christ only for those he has decided to save. Sublapsarian Calvinism resembles infralapsarian Calvinism except that God provides atonement in Christ that is sufficient for the world, even though he will apply it only to certain elect individuals. For a discussion of these three varieties of Calvinism, see Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 842-843.

<sup>9</sup> "Since he foresees future events only by reason of the fact that he decreed that they take place, they vainly raise a quarrel over foreknowledge, when it is clear that all things take place rather by his determination and bidding" (*Institutes* 3.23.6). See also 1.16.3; 1.18.1.

<sup>10</sup> Calvinists have always had a hard time explaining how God can cause everything and yet not be the author of sin. Louis Berkhof states candidly: "It is said that if the decretive will of God also determined the entrance of sin into the world, God thereby becomes the author of sin and really wills something that is contrary to His moral perfection. . . . Reformed theologians, while maintaining on the basis of such passages as Acts 2:23; 3:8; etc., that God's decretive will also includes the sinful deeds of man, are always careful to point out that this must be conceived in such a way that God does not become the author of sin. They frankly admit that they cannot solve the difficulty. . . ." *Systematic Theology*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1941), 78-79. Berkhof says that



it is acceptable to think of God permitting rather than causing sin, as long as one remembers that "God's will to permit sin carries certainty with it" (79). Calvin himself acknowledges that God is the author of sin; his main concern is to show that sinners are not thereby absolved from guilt (*Institutes* 3.23.3). He declares that both God's secret decree of predestination and humankind's own wickedness caused the fall: "Accordingly, man falls according as God's providence ordains, but he falls by his own fault" (3.23.8). In responding to the charge that God's secret will (to cause sin) contradicts his revealed will (which prohibits sin), he appeals to mystery: "When we do not grasp how God wills to take place what he forbids to be done, let us recall our mental incapacity, and at the same time consider that the light in which God dwells is not without reason called unapproachable [I Tim. 6:16], because it is overspread with darkness" (1.18.3). Bruce Ware argues that God causes evil (*God's Lesser Glory*, 204-205) but is not the direct agent of evil: "God ordains evil, uses evil, and accomplishes infinitely good purposes through evil, but he never *does* evil" (212). So God avoids responsibility for evil by sub-contracting it.

<sup>11</sup> Calvin, *Institutes* 3.2.11-12. Modern Calvinists generally have not had the nerve to follow Calvin on this point.

<sup>12</sup> Wesley, "Predestination," 10:229.

<sup>13</sup> Calvin notes: "For as Augustine truly contends, they who measure divine justice by the standard of human justice are acting perversely" (*Institutes* 3.24.17).

<sup>14</sup> "For God's will is so much the highest rule of righteousness that whatever he wills, by the very fact that he wills it, must be considered righteous" (Calvin, *Institutes* 3.23.2). This is sometimes known as the "divine command theory of ethics." Both Luther and Calvin appealed to this view to support their belief in predestination. Jerry L. Walls, "Divine Commands, Predestination, and Moral Intuition," in *The Grace of God, the Will of Man: A Case for Arminianism*, ed. Clark H. Pinnock (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989), 261, 264-265.

<sup>15</sup> R. K. White has a stunning answer to God's role in the problem of evil: God causes evil but is not responsible for it because he is not answerable to anyone. God is responsible for evil in that he "created a world in which evil was inevitable," he allows evils to continue to exist, and he preserves the world "in such a way that evils continue." Nevertheless, "God is not responsible for evil in the sense that he is not answerable to anyone. On the contrary, the sinner is answerable to God." *No Place for Sovereignty: What's Wrong with Freewill Theism* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 201. In other words, God cannot be held responsible for evil because nobody is powerful enough to hold him accountable. For God, might makes right. Wright acknowledges that the omniscient God might seem to be the being most culpable for evil, because greater

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knowledge entails greater responsibility. Nevertheless, "there is no one for him to sin against, for his will is the standard of the good" (201).

<sup>16</sup> *The Writings of Pilgram Marpeck*, ed. and trans. William Klassen and Walter Klaassen (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1978), 341.

**Light on Leviticus**

By David W. Baker\*

Though it is not the most popular of Old Testament books among the reading public, Leviticus has engendered a veritable tsunami of commentaries and related studies in recent years. Riding the crest, or possibly even driving the wave, have been the works of Jacob Milgrom, Professor Emeritus of Biblical Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. His three-volume Anchor Bible commentary on the book is without peer, and I doubt if they will ever be duplicated.<sup>1</sup> Arguably the leading living expert on biblical ritual and cult, Milgrom provides an exhaustive analysis of every verse and word in the book. He is especially helpful in his discussions of parallel biblical passages of import (there is a 76-page index of OT passages cited, with ½ page of NT citations), and also he makes available ancient Near Eastern comparative material (sources in Aramaic, Hittite, Greek, Ugaritic, Punic, Egyptian, Persian, and Latin, as well as those from Mesopotamia). He brings some of this material in through the work of some of his own students, several having become recognized authorities in their own right, who have contributed sections of the discussion.

Useful for many readers, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, will be his insights derived from rabbinical sources, since the rabbis provide some of the earliest commentary. While no-one will agree with every interpretation, he judiciously presents alternative views so the evidence can be weighed by the reader. Use of Hebrew would be an advantage to the reader, but much can be gained even by those who are unskilled in it. No serious student of the Pentateuch can be without the set, which should also be in every theological library.

A distillation of Milgrom's massive erudition has just been made available in his commentary from Fortress.<sup>2</sup> It is a masterful crystallization of the vast amount of material into a scope manageable for the common reader. Just as one example, the 358 pages dedicated to the sacrificial section of Leviticus 1-7 in his 3-volume work have here been reduced to 55. He does this by dealing only with selected themes and texts, rather than touching every aspect. This single volume is an excellent place to begin, and provides a good entrée into not only the book of Leviticus, but also into the fuller work of Milgrom.

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Another full-scale commentary, by John W. Kleinig, comes from a Christian perspective.<sup>3</sup> Kleinig is a Lutheran pastor and professor in Australia. The series to which the volume belongs seeks to reflect "an evangelical orientation, a steadfast Christological perspective, and eschatological view toward the ultimate good of Christ's bride, and a concern that the wedding feast of the King's Son may be filled with all manner of guests (Mt 22:1-14)" (xiii). The author's stated audiences include those missionaries and teachers presenting God's word among animists (who experience an entry into God's word through such ritual texts in ways not found in other literary genres), postmodern youth who encounter society's continuing pollutants in various forms, and all believers who worship and encounter God through liturgy.

Kleinig, in addition to providing very useful commentary, has several elements which aid in making the volume user-friendly. He has 26 figures and diagrams which visually present elements of the text in ways which can elucidate them in ways simple words find difficult to do. He also uses a series of 15 icons in the margins of the commentary to identify such themes as trinity, baptism, worship, and justification. These are helpful guideposts for students working their way into the often foreign terrain of Leviticus. They indicate that it is not so strange after all, but is inhabited by ancestors of theological and practical friends which have already become familiar through study of the New Testament. (As a practical benefit, the icons also leave room along the page margins to make personal notes while reading.)

The commentary proper consists of the author's translation, followed by technical textual notes which assume knowledge of Hebrew. The following commentary does not presuppose this in its discussion of each passage's context, structure, and content, which includes considerable theological discussion. The latter includes quite regularly a section on Christ's fulfillment of the theological aspect under discussion. Kleinig also spends considerable time analyzing ritual aspects of the text, a valuable exercise since that is a major concern of the book as a whole.

The volume will be especially useful for preachers and teachers. It should be in any theological library, including most church libraries.

Preachers and teachers will also find much use in a volume by Allan Ross which, as the subtitle indicates, is not a full-blown commentary but rather an expositional guide.<sup>4</sup> Ross is Old Testament professor at Beeson Divinity School in Alabama. The discussion of each passage begins with a brief introduction, a summary of its theological ideas, a synthesis consisting of a passage summary and outline, and a suggested order for exposition, where comments are made on the passage itself as well as other relevant biblical, and



extra-biblical, material. He concludes each section with a 1-sentence statement of its main point as well as suggestions as to what needs to be highlighted in its exposition, including useful ties into the New Testament. Each section concludes with a brief bibliography. I feel that preachers must grapple with the meat of a text in order to come to their own understanding of it, a view shared by Ross. He has supplied a distillation of his own such grappling which should prove an especially valuable resource for busy preachers and teachers, though it must not replace the text itself. All theological libraries, including those of preachers, should include this volume, though it must be supplemented by fuller commentaries.

The Interpretation series from John Knox Press also has the preacher and teacher in mind, but it is closer in form to a commentary than an expositional guide like that of Ross. Leviticus is covered by Samuel Balentine, formerly professor of Old Testament at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond.<sup>5</sup> He provides useful reflection in his introduction of the function of ritual texts, leading us not only to reflect on theology but also to enact it. He also provides a lengthy and useful reflection of worship in relation to Leviticus as part of his introduction to the book. For each passage, Balentine briefly exegetes the text, and then provides some theological reflection. Here he at times brings out New Testament application.

While this volume brings out some useful and interesting points, it pales in such a review as this since it is placed alongside other works which are so much fuller as regards interpretation and exposition. While it should be in every serious theological library, this work will probably not be the first work on Leviticus which should be consulted.

Two other recent commentaries cover Leviticus with several others of the pentateuchal books, so giving it much shorter shrift. Glen Martin's volume looks at Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers together.<sup>6</sup> The author is a Southern Baptist pastor in California, and the volume, as well as the series to which it belongs, is directed toward the lay reader. At less than 100 pages on Leviticus (along with 158 on Exodus and 125 on Numbers), there is only a very cursory look at the text. After a 4-page introduction, in which there is no reference to any secondary literature, the author divides the text into sections for study.

As an example of the format, Martin starts with the unit of Leviticus 1-7. Beginning with a quote (interestingly enough from Harry Emerson Fosdick, another Baptist but one having little in common with the author of this volume), he presents the section in a "nutshell" of 3 sentences, a one page introduction, and then comments on smaller sections. This begins with a one sentence main idea and supporting ideas from each smaller textual unit, with one or two

paragraph discussions of each of these units. In the conclusion he uses an illustrative story, a set of principles and another of applications. A life application is followed by a prayer, a section of 6 'deeper discoveries', where some aspects receive a bit fuller treatment, a teaching outline, and issues for discussion. Still there is no mention of any secondary literature or of any alternative suggestions as regards interpretation. The volume could serve as a resource in personal Bible study, but needs supplementation from a fuller treatment.

Stephen Sherwood, a Catholic priest teaching at the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, also covers three books in his work.<sup>7</sup> They are Leviticus, Number, and Deuteronomy. Following the parameters of the series in which he writes, he undertakes a literary analysis of the texts, analyzing their narrative art more than their historical or cultural environments, which are purposefully omitted. He does provide useful insights into the text. For Leviticus, he spends several pages pointing out NT allusions to the book, discusses its language, plot, structure, and characterization as well as symbolism and imagery before beginning his textual notes. The latter are generally very brief, from a sentence to a paragraph on a verse of longer section, and use a fair amount of transliterated Hebrew. The discussion of each book concludes with a bibliography.

The volume is helpful in the areas which it sets out to address, but is inadequate as a commentary. It therefore needs supplementation by some of the other material discussed here, but also provides a helpful supplement to them, and as such should be in every serious theological library.

The final book reviewed seems by its title to be of a different character than the rest as a technical study of the Septuagint.<sup>8</sup> It joins similar works which the author has produced on each of the books in the Pentateuch, to which Wevers occasionally refers in place of discussing some element of the Leviticus text. The material itself is laid out like a commentary, with a verse-by-verse discussion of content and variations between the Hebrew and Greek texts, and the implications of these variations. While at least rudimentary access to the two languages is necessary in order to recognize the forms under discussion, the material is helpful even for non-experts. The volume closes with an appendix of proposed changes in the LXX, a discussion of the Greek and Hebrew terms for sacrifice, and indexes of Greek words, Hebrew words, grammatical and textual items, and a general index.

Though the volume might appear esoteric due to its title, it will repay study by those seriously interested in not only the text, but also the

understanding, of Leviticus. As such, it needs to be in every serious theological library.

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<sup>1</sup> Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16; Leviticus 17–22, Leviticus 23–27*, The Anchor Bible 3, 3A, 3B. New York: Doubleday, 1991, 2000, 2001. 2714 pp., \$60, vol. 1; \$50, vol. 2 and 3.

<sup>2</sup> Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus: A Book of Ritual and Ethics*, Continental Commentary. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2004. xx + 388 pp., cloth, \$30.00.

<sup>3</sup> John W. Kleinig, *Leviticus*, Concordia Commentary. St Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2003. xlv + 610 pp., cloth, \$42.99.

<sup>4</sup> Allen P. Ross, *Holiness to the Lord: A Guide to the Exposition of the Book of Leviticus*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2002. 496 pp., cloth, \$34.99.

<sup>5</sup> Samuel E. Balentine, *Leviticus*, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1999. xv + 220 pp., cloth, \$24.95.

<sup>6</sup> Glen S. Martin, *Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers*, Holman Old Testament Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002. xi + 387 pp, cloth, \$19.99.

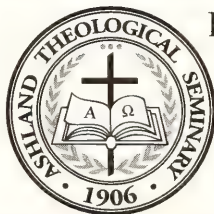
<sup>7</sup> Stephen K. Sherwood, *Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*, Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative & Poetry. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2002. xviii + 306 pp, cloth, \$39.95.

<sup>8</sup> John William Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Leviticus*, Septuagint and Cognate Studies. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997. xxxix + 519 pp., cloth, \$49.95.

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### Book Reviews

Chad Brand, Charles Draper and Archie England, eds., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*. Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003. 1,717 pp., hardcover, \$29.97.

The *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* contains approximately 12,000 articles written by over 300 biblical scholars and church men and women. Most of the authors are Baptist in background with a few notable exceptions. This work is a thorough revision, updating and a huge expansion of the original *Holman Bible Dictionary*. It took six years to complete the project. The articles begin with "Aaron" and continue through "Zuzim." There are extended articles on each book of the Bible accompanied by an outline of the book. Many articles identify the Old Testament perspective as well as the New Testament perspective on the subject under consideration. Major biblical characters as well as biblical doctrines also receive extended treatment.

The commitments of the authors are as follows:

1. A fully authoritative Bible.
  2. The written revelation begins and ends with the Bible.
  3. The trustworthiness, truthfulness, sufficiency, inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible.
- The target audience is students and lay persons.

There are a number of very helpful features present in this work. The word "illustrated" in the title is well chosen with over 700 full color photos with accompanying credits. In addition there are twelve charts, twenty-eight scale reconstructions, and sixty-one internal maps. A very interesting time line of biblical history, world history and church history is found in the front of the dictionary. Up-to-date information on the archeological excavations in Israel is also included. While many articles are based on the biblical languages, they are written in user-friendly style. Another interesting feature is the color quick-tabs that facilitate the alphabetical location of articles. Articles include people, places, things, events, plants, animals, and occupations as well as many other biblical subjects. A helpful pronunciation guide is given for all technical and difficult to pronounce words, as well as is extensive cross referencing.

Richard E. Allison

Kendell H. Easley, *The Illustrated Guide to Biblical History*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003. 306pp., hardcover, \$19.97.

This fascinating work contains 200 full colored photos of important persons and places in biblical history. These range all the way from a picture of a Zigurat at Susa to

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the columns from the Temple of Trajan in ancient Pergamum including a number of photos from the model of the Jerusalem temple at the Holy Land Hotel. The photos are very clear and revealing. In addition, there are 75 attractive, full color maps illustrating the geographical contexts of the many biblical events. These illuminating map studies stretch all the way from "The Ancient Near East" to a map of the "Churches of Revelation." All maps accurately express topography which is a helpful feature for in depth study.

Fifteen time lines assist the reader in locating people and events in biblical history. Every major section of the work begins with an informative time line. Also, there are 130 "Callout Boxes" that provide succinct historical and cultural information on people, places, events, concepts and Bible books. Some of the unique ones include: Holy War, short Introductions to Bible books, Philistia, Baal, Babylonia, Miracles, Demons, Lydia and Angels. The variety is great but the information while helpful is limited. Interestingly, the eschatological scheme is that popularized by George Eldon Ladd.

There are nearly 1,000 entries in the extensive Topical Index, all the way from Aaron to Zophar. This serves as a locator of people, places and concepts. Over 800 entries are found in the Scripture Index which allows the reader easy access to information on scriptural references. The Table of Contents is extensive covering nine pages and including the nine divisions of the work. They are: Introduction, Prologue, God Builds His Nation (2091-931 B.C.), God Educates His Nation (931-586 B.C.), God Keeps A Faithful Remnant (586-6 B.C.), God Purchases Redemption And Begins the Kingdom (6 B.C.- 30 A.D.), God Spreads The Kingdom Through The Church (30-? A.D.), God's Consummation Of His Eternal Kingdom, Epilogue. The obvious thesis of the book is that "The Lord God is graciously building a kingdom of redeemed people for their joy and His own glory."

The author is chair of the New Testament Department of Mid-America Baptist Seminary. The photos come from the Biblical Illustrator. This is a very helpful volume to have at hand while reading scripture devotionally and for study.

Richard E. Allison

John Glynn, *Commentary and Reference Survey*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2003, 311 pp., paper, \$18.99.

For more than ten years John Glynn has been about the unending task of compiling a comprehensive guide to biblical and theological resources (the subtitle of this work), unending because literature is pouring off the presses more rapidly than any guide can keep pace with. No one has made the attempt to do so better than Glynn, however, and this latest edition is as well nigh perfect and up-to-date as one could hope for in this respect. Not only does it list hundreds of printed works, but it includes such features as computer resources and internet web sites, thus opening the doors to vast resources that no printed publication could ever contain.

At the beginning of this decade-long project, Glynn concentrated almost exclusively on commentaries, but over the years he has broadened his scope to include

biblical introductions, studies on biblical backgrounds and history, language resources, hermeneutics, and church history. To this point, such expansion has been beneficial but one would hope that continuing enlargement would not result in a loss of focus on basic tools of biblical study, a focus that gave rise to the work in the first place and that is of most immediate interest to students of the Bible. The author might well consider separate volumes on publications that are tangential to biblical scholarship but not so closely related as to be included in a collection like this one. This would more readily identify the contents and, incidentally, keep the costs within a range more palatable to the average pastor and layman.

Specialists in various disciplines will, of course, take issue with inclusions and exclusions of items of interest to them as well as labels such as "technical," "critical," "liberal," and the like. Perhaps descriptors like these are unavoidable – and even helpful for the most part – but they are matters of personal judgment about which not all readers can or will agree. As for notable omissions, this reviewer, with a predilection to Old Testament Theology, notes, for example, the following that should be included in future editions: W. J. Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation* (Thomas Nelson, 1984); Walter Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 2 vols. (Westminster, 1961, 1967); William Dyrness, *Themes in Old Testament Theology* (InterVarsity, 1979); and Willem Van Gemeren, *The Progress of Redemption* (Zondervan, 1988). But this, too, is a matter of personal preference and obviously no author can cater to the tastes of every reader.

This said, Glynn's survey remains the best available. It is systematic, clear, comprehensive, and user friendly. He and Kregel are to be commended for having provided serious students of the Bible with a key to unlock the toolbox of implements that will make Bible study more delightful and productive than otherwise possible.

Eugene Merrill, Dallas Theological Seminary

Paul H. Wright, *Holman Quick Source Guide: Atlas of Bible Lands*. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2002. 160 pp, paper, \$9.99.

This work is touted as "the quickest way to get the big picture of the Holy Land." An understanding of the geography of the Holy Land is essential to interpreting scripture. This is true because the writers of scripture assume that the reader understands the physical, climactic and orientation of the land.

The author is the director of the Jerusalem University College in Jerusalem. He has lived in Israel for over eight years and has obviously traveled extensively in the land.

This colorful compact guide contains 101 Maps, photos and diagrams. The "Introduction" deals succinctly with topics such as the Ancient Near East, Modern Political Divisions, Modern States of the Area, Longitudinal Zones, Climate Patterns, and National Routes. The second section of the work looks at the four broad regions of Palestine: Southern, Central, Northern and Eastern. The third part of the work presents 86 pages of maps that begin with "The Table of Nations" and culminates with "The Expansion of Christianity in the Second and Third Centuries." Besides the usual, one



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finds maps such as: The Journeys of Joseph, The Judges of Israel, David's Wars of Conquest, Elijah and Elisha, Jewish Refugees in Egypt, Roman Rule in Palestine, Herod's Building Program, Passion Week in Jerusalem and The First Jewish Revolt.

There is an amazing amount of information presented in a very user friendly way in this slightly larger than pocket size book.

Richard Allison

G. Johannes Botterweck *et al.*, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol XII. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003. xxiv + 612 pp., cloth, \$55.00.

G. Johannes Botterweck *et al.*, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol XIII. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004. xxiii + 653 pp., cloth, \$60.00.

G. Johannes Botterweck *et al.*, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol XIV. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004. xxiv + 702 pp., cloth, \$60.00.

Work on this important series continues with alacrity, bringing it almost to a conclusion. These volumes contain words from *pāsah-qûm* (vol. XII), *qôš-rāqîa'* (vol. XIII), and *rāša'-šākan* (vol. XIV). Included are discussions of numerous terms of significance, including those on Passover, image/idol, fruitfulness, sin/offense/crime (*pš'*), Sabaoth, command/decreed, Zion, holy, voice (vol. XII); jealousy, call, see, head, be large/many, spirit/wind, show compassion, evil, Rephaim, kill (*rsh* 'culpable killing by use of force', but never in war or self-defense, p. 632) (vol. XIII); guilty, laugh, set/put/place, have insight, be glad, hate (emotional aversion without necessarily implying wicked intention, but rather a distancing), king, ask, remnant, swear, seven (with an extensive bibliography, its importance due partly to its symbolic as well as literal use), Sabbath, Shaddai, turn around, sing, and dwell (vol. XIV).

The series, including these volumes, is very useful for OT interpretation, showing the current state of understanding of key terms. While it does not preclude the continued necessity of doing one's own word studies, the entries make available material not readily accessible to most readers of the OT, most particularly the use of other languages and literatures to throw light on the terms being discussed. The series is necessary for every academic theological library as well as the personal libraries of serious students of the OT.

David W. Baker

Gary A. Long, *Grammatical Concepts 101 for Biblical Hebrew*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002. Xvii + 189 pp., paper, \$19.95.

As a beginning Hebrew instructor I have learned, the hard way, what seasoned Hebrew teachers already know. It is difficult to talk about Hebrew grammar when students are unable to talk about English grammar. Unfortunately, most students have not



thought in grammatical terms since elementary school, and this puts them at a disadvantage when discussing the finer points of Hebrew. Rather than sending our students back to the 6th grade, Gary Long's *Grammatical Concepts 101 for Biblical Hebrew* can bridge the divide.

Perhaps the greatest value of this book is that it explains English grammar first. Because most American students learn Hebrew through the syntactical grid of English, a faulty understanding of English grammar means difficulty comprehending Hebrew grammar. Long first describes how a particular feature of grammar works in English, illustrating it with short sentences, charts, or tables and then describes how the same grammatical concept works in Hebrew. He illustrates the Hebrew explanations with Hebrew examples that include interlinear style translations printed below the Hebrew text. The concepts are often presented graphically with callouts and arrows used to identify the parts of the sentence under discussion.

The book is not meant to be a Hebrew grammar or syntax in the technical sense. Therefore it is not comprehensive. Rather it is meant to be used alongside the standard grammars. Students would be well served by reading the appropriate section in *Grammatical Concepts* as a preview of the subject under discussion in their Hebrew class. Long gives a broad overview and their grammar will fill in the details. For example, Long explains that there are definite articles in both English and Hebrew. He illustrates this fact with sentences in English and Hebrew. But he does not detail the various ways a definite article can be used in either language. When it comes to clausal syntax, Long explains that there are dependent clauses in both languages, but does not explain the various dependent clauses that exist. The standard grammars should be consulted for these details. Some will consider this lack of lengthy explanation a positive feature of the book. It allows the student to focus on understanding the larger concept before diving into the details.

Long agrees with the growing consensus that the Hebrew verbal system describes aspect not tense. The sections that treat these subjects are quite helpful as diagrams clarify each concept under discussion. He avoids the confusion regarding what to call the וַיִּקְרָא form by simply transliterating it *wayyiqtol* as opposed to calling it Preterite or Imperfect with *waw* consecutive. But a simple description of this terminology would have made the section even more helpful.

The section on Volitives is quite detailed. But the explanation of how negative commands are constructed could lead to confusion. Long explains, "For negative second person commands, Biblical Hebrew commonly uses אַל and לֹא immediately before second person Prefix (Imperfect) Conjugation form" (99). This is misleading in that the form negated by אַל is more accurately called a Jussive (cf. W-O, §34.4a). In addition his description of which types of verbs take a shortened form of the Imperfect in the Jussive ignores the Hiphil stem (cf. GKC §48g)

On the downside, Long waxes technical at times in what is ostensibly a basic text. The first part of the book, "Foundations", is laden with linguistic terminology. Needless to say students need to learn *some* of these terms when they are beginning, but there is much more here than the average beginning student needs to know. Assigning this chapter first may very well discourage students from reading the entire book. What is

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more, the sections on Semantics and Discourse Analysis seem quite complicated for the beginning student. A footnote explains that most of this chapter appeared in a *Vetus Testamentum* article! This is hardly beginner reading. Despite this drawback it is a nice summary of how to think in terms of discourse categories.

A second problem is that the book is missing a glossary. True many of the terms are explained in context, but not all of them are. For example, although Long mentions the fact that case endings do not exist in Biblical Hebrew, he also never defines the term 'Accusative' which he is forced to use in his discussion of the function of the Accusative case (135). A glossary would have made the book more helpful as a reference guide.

In spite of these somewhat negative aspects, the book is still a useful resource which is worth recommending. Hebrew students who would not normally consult an English grammar may be more inclined to use Long's book because it was written with them in mind. This text actually illustrates the fact that understanding English grammar can help students learn Hebrew more easily!

Steven H. Sanchez, Dallas Theological Seminary

T. Muraoka (ed.), *Semantics of Ancient Hebrew*. Abr-Nahrain Supplement Series, Vol. 6. Louvain: Peeters, 1998. 151 pp., paper, 35 Euros.

This volume presents in print form a selection of lexical entries from the Semantics of Ancient Hebrew Database (SAHD) project. The purpose of this book is to make a sample of the project's work known to a larger scholarly audience and thus to foster reaction and input. The project and its principles were introduced in the earlier volume: T. Muraoka (ed.), *Studies in Ancient Hebrew Semantics*, Abr-Nahrain Suppl. 4 (Louvain: Peeters, 1995). Though the project has created a web site for the electronic presentation of the database (<http://www.sahd.uklinux.net>), lack of funds has prevented further development of the site, which includes only a few lexical entries. (A related site, maintained by project secretary David Reimer is <http://homepages.ed.ac.uk/dreimer/SAHD/>.) There are now nine universities across Europe (none in the U.S.) participating in SAHD, with each center covering its own costs, as no special grant has yet been obtained.

The SAHD is intended as a research tool to facilitate and organize in-depth study of Hebrew semantics rather than as another dictionary of Biblical Hebrew. While dictionaries tend to list translation equivalents without detailed discussion, SAHD presents both annotated data upon which translation equivalents are based and bibliographical surveys tracing the progress of research. The SAHD is also not another theological lexicon, in that its coverage extends to all lexemes of ancient Hebrew, not merely terms of theological importance. Moreover, the scope of the project includes Hebrew texts of the Bible, ancient inscriptions, Ben Sira, and Qumran, making the SAHD a kind of encyclopedia of ancient Hebrew lexical semantics.

This volume contains entries for 13 lexemes: בְּרִיאָה ("creation, created thing"), דֶּרֶךְ ("way, road"), הָדָם ("footstool"), כִּסֵּא ("throne, seat"), קֶטֶר ("crown, diadem"), קִאֲרָה

("curse"), חֶקֶל II ("wagon-track, *ruṭ* מַשְׁעוֹל ("hollow way"), נָזַר ("consecration"), וָקֶבֶת II ("to curse, blaspheme"), כִּתְרוֹ ("crown"), קָבַב ("to curse"), and שֶׁבֶט ("rod, scepter, tribe"). These terms relate to the semantic domains of "creation/creature", "curse", "road/path", and "royal appurtenances". Each entry is organized into eight sections: Introduction (including doubtful textual readings), Root and Comparative Material (i.e., etymology), Formal Characteristics (e.g., noun pattern), Syntagmatics, Versions, Lexical/Semantic Fields, Exegesis, and Conclusions. The Exegesis section covers issues of interpretation, treating particular passages and considering non-written evidence, such as that from art and archaeology. Within each section, information is set out in numbered subsections: A.1, A.2, etc., for acceptable or plausible views, and B.1, B.2, etc., for implausible views. An advantage of this enumerated structure is that it lends itself to incremental addition and growth (in its electronic form), in the manner of a computer database. A weakness is a certain loss of overall coherence in the assemblage of sections; the Conclusions section remedies this, but can also exhibit lack of cohesion with the body of the entry. Another shortcoming is the unavoidable overlap that can occur among sections. Under כֶּרֶךְ, for example, one finds valuable exegetical discussion under Syntagmatics, thoughts relevant to semantic fields under Formal Characteristics, and syntagmatic and semantic-field information under Exegesis. To some extent this problem arises unavoidably from the difficulty of disentangling all the semantic aspects of a word into mutually exclusive categories, according to a database concept of organization. Nevertheless, the organization seems too loose to be designated a "database", since kernels of semantic information are embedded in subsections of prose exposition, varying in length and approach depending on the author. For example, semantic fields in use for a lexeme are not enumerated under any system of categorization, but arise at various points in the course of discussion. As a result, the reader must regard an article as a repository of raw data and qualified conclusions, rather than as a definitive categorization of the semantics of a lexeme—and this appears to be intent of the project.

An important feature of the SAHD (and this volume) is the enumeration of non-Biblical uses of a lexeme, with commentary, along with Biblical uses. Thus, we are quickly led to the occurrences in epigraphic material, Ben Sira, and the Dead Sea Scrolls, with further discussion for doubtful or reconstructed forms. This can be helpful even in the not infrequent cases in which there are no extra-Biblical occurrences, so that we may immediately focus our research on the Biblical text with confidence. It could be said that the SAHD serves as a sort of "commentary on the concordance", in reviewing in selective detail the specific occurrences of a lexeme. For a tool providing the foundations for translation equivalents, this is just as it should be, since the listed meanings of a word, as found in a dictionary, should be based on the word's actual uses, as displayed in a concordance.

Another vital SAHD feature is the bibliographical collection and survey relevant to each lexeme. For anyone wishing to come up to speed with current scholarly discussion, whether found in dictionaries, commentaries, *Festschriften*, or journal articles, the SAHD serves as an index ordered by lexeme into the secondary literature. This is particularly helpful in that much writing on the semantics of words is scattered across a variety of sources. Moreover, this survey is sometimes supplemented by personal



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communications from relevant experts, who may offer corrective insight when past literature has missed the mark (e.g., the etymology of נָקַד; cf. נָקַד).

Nonetheless, this volume (and the present SAHD) seems useful only to a limited audience. For one, the project seems still to be in an embryonic, even experimental stage. The limited number of lexemes treated and the lack of a genuine database (electronic) or active web site, not to mention the noticeable number of typos in this volume, suggest that the project may be overstretched in undertaking such an ambitious task. Future publication of more complete volumes, or the availability of a database, will remedy this problem. A second factor, though, is the project's scope in including non-theological terms. Though this ought to be regarded as a salutary change from the common preoccupation with theological word-studies, many pastors and teachers serving in churches may find much of the SAHD of little immediate usefulness for sermon and lesson preparation. We may hope that in time a full-fledged encyclopedia of ancient Hebrew lexical semantics will emerge from this project, guiding scholars and students of all sorts toward a more linguistically informed way of studying Biblical language. In the meantime, readers will find a plethora of linguistic data, ready-to-use bibliographies, and useful exegetical insights for the lexemes currently represented in this volume and the SAHD.

Scobie Smith, Oak Harbor, WA

J. Hoftijzer and K. Jongeling, *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions*. Leiden, New York: E. J. Brill, 1995. Lxxi + 1266 pp in two volumes, cloth, \$484.00.

This dictionary is a translation from a French edition originally published between 1960–1065. It has been updated, since new texts have been discovered or published since then, and the interpretation of older texts has also continued to advance. The dictionary covers material written not only in Hebrew, but also Aramaic and its various dialects, Old Canaanite, Phoenician and Punic, Moabite, Ammonite and Edomite. Noticeable in its absence is Ugaritic, a major player in the geographical and linguistic neighborhood. The authors decided to ignore it since it needs its own dictionary, based on the amount of textual material written in it. While this need might be true, the lack of any evidence of it here in this work, even if only in an abbreviated form, makes this dictionary incomplete, and of less use than it could be. [This lack of a complete Ugaritic dictionary has been met by the work by G. del Olmo Lete and J. Sanmartín reviewed elsewhere in this volume.] Syriac is not included due to its use after most of the material included here. This exclusion is more justifiable than that of Ugaritic.

Following examples of the various forms in which the word occurs in each language, the translation of each word is given, with some indication of the various genres in which each word occurs. There is usually also a brief context of some occurrences of the word so that its use can be appreciated *in situ*. Where cognate words have related but different spellings (e.g. *šwb–twb*) both are discussed in the same entry, with a cross-reference supplied under the alternate forms. Entries are alphabetized in the



order of the Hebrew alphabet, and all forms are transliterated, so one does not need to be familiar with the numerous scripts represented.

This reference work is valuable for detailed Hebrew exegesis, allowing the student to determine how words are used among Israel's neighbors. It deserves a place in every serious academic library, as well as many personal libraries, though the price will undoubtedly make the latter *desideratum* impractical.

David W. Baker

G. del Olmo Lete & J. Sanmartín, *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2 vol. Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2004. xlv + 1006 pp. cloth, \$249.

Ugaritic is a Semitic language which is a cousin to Hebrew. It is the main dialect of those peoples designated as 'Canaanite' in the Old Testament. Most of its texts, which are numerous, came from approximately the period of the Israelite judges, and they give a good window into the life and times of that period. The language and its literature are extremely important for understanding the Old Testament in its world.

This is a comprehensive dictionary of that language based on the texts discovered and edited to date. It is a most welcome tool, as indicated by the quick exhaustion of the print run of the first edition which necessitated this slightly revised edition. Text readings are for the most part based on M. Dietrich *et al.*, *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places (KTU: second enlarged edition)* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995), the standard collection of Ugaritic texts.

The entries are arranged according to a variation of the Latin alphabet, which differs in order from that of the Hebrew and also from that used by native speakers of the language. One reason for this is that it has several phonemes which are not written in Hebrew. It thus repays the time to explore the actual ordering before trying to use the book. This can be illustrated by starting their ordering with the three vocalized *aleph* forms and then the '*ayin*', a position for the latter (for which they use an International Phonetic Alphabet sign, which will be unfamiliar to most readers) which will be counter-intuitive for students of Hebrew, a primary audience for the dictionary. Entries include independent words, appended forms such as the prefixed preposition *b-* or the suffixed pronominal morpheme *-h*, and proper nouns.

Entries can consist of: the word itself, presented in the actual form in which it occurs, without any reconstruction of vocalization; identification of morphological information regarding part of speech, gender, etc.; a gloss indicating meaning; etymological information; forms in which the term occurs; bibliography of the more important discussions of the term; a fuller analysis of the various meanings, with examples. A user will need to be aware of, and use, the abbreviation list at the beginning of the book. No explanation is given there of a star used in some entries, though it appears this might indicate places where this edition differs from the first (though, since the first is not available to me, I am unable to verify this).

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We thank the editors and their collaborators for pursuing such an arduous task as dictionary production, and the publishers for bringing it to readers, though a reduced price would make it that much more attractive. The volumes need to be in every serious theological library.

David W. Baker

Craig C. Broyles, ed. *Interpreting the Old Testament: A Guide for Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001. 272 pp. Paperback. 0801022711.

This is a helpful collection of nine original essays by eight Old Testament scholars. The editor opens the collection with a chapter entitled "Interpreting the Old Testament: Principles and Steps" (pp. 13-62). The book consists of the following essays: David W. Baker, "The Language and Text of the Old Testament" (pp. 63-83), V. Philips Long, "Reading the Old Testament as Literature" (pp. 85-123); John Bimson, "Old Testament History and Sociology" (pp. 125-155); Craig C. Broyles, "Traditions, Intertextuality, and Canon" (157-175); Elmer A. Martens, "The History of Religion, Biblical Theology, and Exegesis" (pp. 177-199); Richard S. Hess, "Ancient Near Eastern Studies" (201-220); Paul Edward Hughes, "Compositional History: Source, Form and Redaction Criticism" (221-244); and Jonathan R. Wilson, "Theology and the Old Testament" (245-264). The book contains scripture and subject indexes.

In his introductory essay, Broyles comments: "Exegesis of the Bible should be an adventure, filled with anticipation and holy fear, because in exegesis we hear the voice of the living God" (13). The editor and contributors have provided the church and the academy with a very helpful tool for enabling students, pastors and scholars to read and interpret the Bible properly. As a pastor and teacher, I found these essays to be of great help in refreshing my memory and in challenging me to a renewed commitment to this task. Seminary students will find this work quite useful as a supplement to their texts on exegetical method. Pastors would do well to obtain a copy and digest its contents. In the end, their congregations would greatly benefit as they hear sermons and participate in Bible studies.

David M. Phillips

William J. Dumbrell. *The Faith of Israel: A Theological Survey of the Old Testament*, second edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.

As the subtitle indicates, this is a survey of the Old Testament, focusing on the message of the texts. The book is organized according the traditional order of the Hebrew text, viz., the Law, the Prophets (Former and Latter), and the Writings. Dumbrell does not deal with issues of date and authorship; rather, his emphasis is on the canonical form of the books. The reader, upon noting the title, should not be deceived into thinking that this is a simplistic collection of handbook-entry-summaries. Dumbrell does provide summary details, but his readings are often thought-provoking and

stimulating. One reads, for example, his treatments of the early portions of Genesis, Ezekiel 40-48, Daniel, and finds a number of suggestive discussions.

While the book follows the tripartite order of the Hebrew text, Dumbrell offers no suggestions as to how that affects his (and our) reading of the biblical books. Nor does he offer introductions to the divisions themselves. These would have been helpful and would, I believe, improve a work that is already extremely useful. Teachers should recommend this book to their students; pastors should use this work and get it into the hands of their members.

The book does not provide a preface or introduction, so the reader is not told how this second edition differs from or improves upon the first. It seems clear that in this revision Dumbrell has rewritten (or it has been reedited) with a concern for more inclusive language.

David M. Phillips

Baruch Halpern, *David's Secret Demons: Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King*. Grand Rapids, Mi.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001.

The turn of the millennium has seen a resurgence of interest in the David of the Bible and the David of history. The present work, by a historian who has argued stridently against a "minimalist" approach to the history of Israel, forges an impressive synthesis of textual, archaeological, and comparative materials to render an account of the rise, reign, and kingdom of David. Halpern argues for the antiquity of the biblical record of David's reign, as it is preserved in 1-2 Samuel, and places its composition during the reign of Solomon. In a provocative twist, however, he suggests that this record is not credible. Rather, he insists, the story of David that emerges from the biblical text must be regarded as propaganda in the service of royal apology, replete with exaggeration, careful selection and presentation of events, and in some cases outright fabrication.

Halpern divides his study into five main sections comprising twenty three chapters, followed by an appendix. He opens with a brief introductory section that highlights the unique personage of David and the biblical narrative. Two chapters of textual analysis then open his study. The first of these lays out his argument, supported by textual and archaeological data, for an early date of the materials, while the second elaborates his reasons for regarding the account as a royal apology. (In short, the bulk of the narrative seems to be driven by the need to explain why so many people around David met an untimely end.) The notion of a political agenda behind the composition of the narrative leads, in the third section, to a more extensive historical analysis that begins by looking to royal reporting in the ancient Near East and applying lessons learned to the accounts of David's accomplishments (focusing in particular on 2 Samuel 8). Halpern develops an approach that he terms "The Tiglath-Pileser Principle," after the Assyrian emperor in whose reign royal reports made the transition from display inscription to true annals. In brief, this principle recognizes that "spin" is an ancient phenomenon. The Assyrians appropriated metonymy and exaggeration to report the emperor's



accomplishments in the best possible light. In light of this, Halpern argues that the historian must evaluate royal reports with a healthy skepticism and ask, "What is the minimum the king might have done to lay claim to the achievements he publishes?...each small mark of prestige becomes the evidence for a grand triumph" (p. 126). Applying this principle to an evaluation of the reports of David's reign yields a more modest, yet more historically plausible account of David's reign and influence. The portrait that emerges suggests that David's influence over the powers of Syria and Palestine was due more to shrewd diplomacy than force of arms and that the extent of this influence, particularly over Philistia, Hamath, and Moab, was actually far less than is suggested by the biblical text.

In a brief fourth section Halpern continues his discussion of David's interaction and actual influence over regional powers and traces the process and rationale that gave rise to an inflation of David's achievements in later centuries. The fifth section then caps the study with a biography of David, now informed by the results of Halpern's textual and historical conclusions. These conclusions paint a portrait of an individual who is even more duplicitous and resourceful than that rendered by the biblical text. Halpern suggests that David's activities were the catalyst for the formation of the tribe of Judah and the formation of the Israelite state. Through shrewd manipulation of alliances David brought pressure to bear on the Israelite tribes loyal to Saul, and, over the course of time, brought down the house of Saul and orchestrated his own elevation as king. In Halpern's David we see a warrior who adapts combat tactics learned from his Philistine overlord and who exploits internal squabbles among the Philistine cities to his own advantage. Many of those associated with the biblical David assume different roles. Nahash, for example, becomes an ally of David in his struggle against Saul, while Absalom becomes an unwitting instrument of David's will to power. And Solomon, known to the court as the child of Uriah, usurps David's chosen successor (Adonijah) and crafts a fiction that confirms him as David's son.

This study of David makes several important contributions. First, Halpern offers an informed and detailed argument for the antiquity of the biblical account and for the existence of a David kingdom in the 10<sup>th</sup> Century BCE. Second, his comparative study of Assyrian annals both clarifies the propagandistic character of the David narrative and presents a more precise method for reading it. And finally, his respect for the biblical text and for the disciplines of archaeology and history offer a way forward in the daunting task of integrating these various components, even though many readers will find it hard to digest the grain of salt with which he takes the biblical narrative. This way forward might find benefit by engaging the significant body of contemporary literary studies on David (which Halpern neglects). Much of his textual analysis focuses on the rhetoric of the biblical narrative, precisely the area of study that has received attention from literary critics. Halpern clearly appreciates the narrative's sophistication, and the asides with which he peppers his exposition demonstrate his desire to engage a wider audience. These also have been emphases of contemporary literary analysis. In this respect, the author's study represents yet another instance of the lack of interaction



between historical and literary approaches within scholarship. This book is not the last word on David, but it is certainly a forceful one.

L. Daniel Hawk

Karen Jobes and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000. 351 pp.

The approach taken by Karen Jobes and Moisés Silva in *Invitation to the Septuagint* is quite different than what is found in much of the literature currently available on the Septuagint. Since Septuagintal studies are, as a whole, exceptionally specialized in both methodology and terminology, beginners to the process are easily intimidated. Starting from the premise that the reader may not be aware of the importance of the Septuagint, this book seeks to provide an introduction to the complex world of Septuagint studies. The audience of this book is students in the field of biblical studies, but scholars in the field will also benefit through a reading.

Jobes and Silva have organized the book into three major sections: the History of the Septuagint, the Septuagint in Biblical Studies, and the Current State of Septuagint Studies. The authors have included appendixes which list the organizations currently involved in Septuagint research, a glossary of terms, and a chart listing verse differences between Septuagint and English versions. Illustrations which display various manuscripts and current Septuagint versions are also provided throughout the book. The reader will find the "To Continue Your Study" section in each chapter of the first two major sections especially helpful. These provide bibliographic information for the most up to date Septuagint resources.

The first section of the book discusses the origin of the Septuagint and traces its transmission. Newcomers to the Septuagint will find this section invaluable, since most material available on the subject presupposes this background knowledge. The detailed breakdown provided by the authors on the numerous recensions of the Septuagint will be of special value to those interested in further research in this area. Since the authors assume the reader is unfamiliar with the Septuagint, Hebrew or Greek terms are transliterated and where necessary an explanation is provided.

Whereas the first section is designed to gently ease the beginner into Septuagint studies, the section that follows is intended for the more advanced reader. Knowledge of Hebrew and Greek is necessary to fully appreciate the discussion provided. The strength of this section is that it, although highly specialized at times, provides numerous examples of the difficulty and complexity of research in the Septuagint. Other helpful features include a key for the critical notes of current Septuagint editions and a detailed discussion of methodology for text-criticism of the Septuagint. Although it is designed as an introduction, the authors regularly converse with the most current and respected works in Septuagint studies throughout the book.

The final section is intended to bring the reader up to date on the current status of Septuagint studies. Beginning with a synopsis of 19<sup>th</sup> century Septuagint scholarship, Jobes and Silva trace major contributions to the field up to present day. The authors also

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provide a detailed overview of the theoretical aspects involved in attempting to reconstruct the original text of the Septuagint. The influence of the Hellenistic culture in which the Septuagint was translated is highlighted in this section as well.

Overall Jobes and Silva provide a sound introduction to the Septuagint. This book offers the beginning student a wealth of resources to help him or her dive into Septuagint studies. This text supplies a solid foundation from which further investigation can be undertaken. The authors hope this book will "inspire future generations to take up this fascinating field of research" (p. 10). While their goal may not be realized in every reader, this book does provide an appropriate foundation in the Septuagint for anyone engaging in biblical studies.

Marcus P. Adams

Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Missions in the Old Testament: Israel as a Light to the Nations*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000, pp. 101, \$10.99.

In keeping with recent trends in the theology of missions, this brief study highlights the centrality of missions in the Hebrew Bible. The author maintains that Genesis 12:3 (all nations will be blessed through Abraham) is the Old Testament equivalent to the great commission in the New Testament. In addition, he sees missions embedded in such epic events as the Exodus from Egypt and the covenant with David (II Samuel 7) that his descendents will occupy an everlasting throne. He locates this missions thrust throughout all the literary genres of the Old Testament: legal, historical, poetical and prophetic.

In expanding his theme that Israel's election was to be "a light to the nations," he is arguing against various contemporary biblical and missiological scholars. He believes Israel's mission was active rather than passive: mission was not secondary to the task of being God's particular people. He also refutes those who see Israel's vision of a universal task as being a late historical development in the "servant songs" of Isaiah. For Kaiser, the covenants of Genesis 12 and II Samuel 7 are outgrowths of the primal promise of Genesis 3:15 that a descendent of Eve would bring salvation to all the world's people groups. He thinks it is no accident that the listing of the nations that descend from Noah (Genesis 10 and 11) comes just before the promise of Genesis 12, as the context for the gentiles that Abraham's people will bless through evangelization.

He devotes one of his six chapters to the "servant songs" of Isaiah and their development of the theme that through Israel, and especially through Israel's Messiah, the light of salvation will come to the gentiles. He notes the New Testament's appeal to this Old Testament motif to give legitimacy to the church's witness to the gentiles (especially in Luke-Acts and the Pauline letters). Kaiser believes Paul worked out his missionary call in terms of this theology of Israel.

The book reflects the fact that it is written by a seasoned Old Testament professor and writer. He knows how to make his case so that students and churchmen will appreciate it. One questions only his occasional digression into speculative

possibilities, like following Roger D. Aus's suggestion that Paul's desire to reach Spain ("the ends of the earth" – Romans 11:25) is tied to statements about Tarshish in Isaiah 66.

Overall, the book is a helpful introduction to missionary themes in the Old Testament. Its brevity, its price, and its language should make it attractive to prospective readers.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Gerald A. Klingbeil, ed. *Inicios, Paradigmas y Fundamentos. Estudios teológicos y exegéticos en el Pentateuco*. SMBET 1. (San Martín, Entre Ríos, Argentina: Universidad Adventista del Plata, 2004).

First of all, we must congratulate Dr. Gerald Klingbeil for presenting this project as a real tool for Bible students. He has envisioned an improvement of OT scholarship, and especially as it happens in this work within the Seventh-Day Adventist context.

This first volume of the series of the *River Plate Adventist University Monograph Series in Biblical and Theological Studies* opens with three essays on philosophical and methodological studies of the Pentateuch. Raúl Kerbs in "La crítica del Pentateuco y sus presuposiciones filosóficas," explores the underlying philosophical presuppositions in biblical scholarship, with special attention to Hermeneutics. William Shea in "The Earliest Alphabetic Inscription and Its Implication for the Writing of the Pentateuch," explores archaeological findings from *Wadi el-Hol*, to the north of Thebes, especially its inscriptions. He argues that this is the oldest alphabetic inscription ever found. In so doing, Shea attempts to offer paleographical evidence to suggest that some of the patriarchal narratives could have been written down in the proto-Sinaitic script. Martin Klingbeil, in the third essay of this section, studies the seams between poetry and prose in the Pentateuch, special attention being devoted to looking for traces of the development of the Pentateuchal narrative.

The second major section of this volume is entitled "Pentateuco y Exégesis". It contains five essays, one on Exodus, two on Leviticus, and one each on Numbers and Deuteronomy. Carlos Elías Mora reads Exodus 40 focusing on the syntax, grammar and a structural analysis of the passage. Naturally, his findings uncover the theological threads of the passage, including the God-servant relationship, the importance and the blessings of obedience, the basic role of the inauguration of the Tabernacle in the sacrificial system, and the function of the presence and divine guidance (for the people of Israel) by means of the clouds. Gerald Klingbeil, in "Who Did What When and Why? The Dynamics of Ritual Participants," works on two ritual texts, Leviticus 8 and Emar 39, focusing on the dynamics and interaction of ritual participants. He suggests that these dynamics provide important clues for our understanding of ancient religious reality in general. Laurentiu Ionescu in "Ejes teológicos en Levítico 26," applies a syntactic analysis to the chapter distinguishing three main sections: blessings (vv.3-13), curses (vv.14-35), and the promise of a future restoration (vv. 36-45). Ionescu argues that the thematic emphasis is realized through the combination of the prepositions and the



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presence or lack of the conjunction *waw* (asyndeton). Roy E. Gane concentrates on Numbers 15. His study, entitled "Numbers 15:22-31 and the Spectrum of Moral Faults," presents the argument that Numbers 15 shows a complementarity with other passages (cf. Leviticus 5) about moral faults that range from the least serious inadvertent sins to more defiant sins. Lucien-Jean Bord, a Benedictine monk and specialist in ANE legal texts, concentrates on Deuteronomy 24:10-11. He concludes that in the light of comparative ANE laws the text can be read as a significant legal clause to protect the rights and goods of the debtor.

The final section of this volume is entitled "Pentateuco y Teología" and contains three essays. Martin Pröbstle's study "YHWH Standing Before Abraham: Genesis 18:22 and Its Theological Force," supports the presupposition that although the scholarly tendency is to find scribal emendation (*tiqqun sopherim*) in the verse, those at least in Genesis 18:22c should be taken seriously. The author then elaborates the theological repercussions of situating YHWH standing before Abraham. Merlin Alomía is a Peruvian scholar that presents here a study of the theological motif of the firstborn in the book of Exodus. He also places the biblical case against the background of the use of the motif in the ANE, and extends it to the entire Hebrew Bible (cf. deliverance and covenant ideas associated with this motif). The final essay in this volume is Gerhard Pfandl's "The Soteriological Implications of the Cities of Refuge." His strategy is double: it plays against the ANE context and extends it to the New Testament testimony considering God as refuge and redeemer.

Again, we thankfully welcome this project that enriches the well known scholarly quality of Spanish-speaking authors. This, as many other works from Spanish and Latin American scholars, should prove a useful addition to Seminary libraries.

Eduardo David Rodríguez, Seminario Teológico Sudamericano, Argentina

William R. Millar. *Priesthood in Ancient Israel*. Understanding Biblical Themes. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2001. Viii + 126 pp., paperback.

As part of the Understanding Biblical Themes, this work offers a brief treatment of the important role of priests in ancient Israel. "The goal of this work," according to the author, "is to recover for Protestant Christians the spirituality of the priestly traditions of ancient Israel" (p. 3). Millar "proposes to show how and what the priestly traditions of ancient Israel can teach us about options they see open to us in the spiritual quest."

Millar begins this study with a treatment of Abiathar and Zadok (from 1 Kings 1 & 2). The author notes that "[a]s a working hypothesis...we will assume that the dominant story in Kings is being told from the perspective of Abiathar of the family of Mushite Levite priests" (10). According to Millar, there are two styles of priestly spirituality in ancient Israel. The later strata focuses on "Jerusalem/Zion." The earlier is centered in the wilderness/Horeb traditions. Each of these demonstrates unique approaches to the divine-human relationship. Millar believes that the former tradition



was perpetuated by "the priestly family...that traced its lineage back through Zadok to Aaron" (30). The later tradition was affirmed by the line of Abiathar that went back to Moses.

Millar sees distinct emphases in these two approaches. In the Jerusalem/Zion/Zadok tradition the emphasis is on the holy and on the appropriate boundaries. In the wilderness/Horeb/Abiathar tradition, the focus is on relationships, on a God who breaks boundaries. In the former, "the sacred is that which purifies;" in the latter it heals (30). In chapters 2 ("A Politics of Purity: Aaron and Zadok") and 3 ("A Politics of Relationships: Moses and the Tribe of Levi") Millar treats these two approaches in more detail. In chapter 4 ("A Politics of Centralization: David, Solomon, and the Levites") he focuses on the roles of David and Solomon in centralizing the worship and traditions of Israel in Zion/Jerusalem.

The work concludes with a chapter ("A Politics of Apocalyptic: Beginning and End and New Beginning") that surveys several "apocalyptic" texts (Isaiah 24f; Ezekiel 37; Ezekiel 40-48; and Malachi). The final 2 pages touch on the Jewishness of Jesus. Millar concludes that while the two "pathways" to spirituality are in tension, they need not be mutually exclusive. In fact, he notes, "Each has its own place in its own social situation" (122).

This is a stimulating work, one worth the time of every scholar and student interested in the social function of the priesthood. While a number of Millar's arguments are based on hypothetical reconstruction, we can entertain the possibilities in the hopes that our reading will help us to hear the text more clearly.

David M. Phillips

Jiří Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals in Leviticus 11. Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale. An Intertextual Study*. Adventist Theological Society Dissertation Series 4. Berrien Springs: Adventist Theological Society Publications, 2000. xx + 484 pp., paper, \$19.95.

Moskala's substantial work focuses upon Lev 11, a chapter often misunderstood, or simply shrugged off by modern scholarship. The book is based on the Ph.D. dissertation, defended in 1998 at Andrews University (Berrien Springs, Michigan), where Moskala is currently teaching as Associate Professor of OT Exegesis and Theology. After a succinct foreword by the advisor of the thesis, Jacques Doukhan (pp. i-iv), a brief introduction, enumerating the problem, employed methodology, limitations, purpose and scope of the study (pp. 1-14), M. presents four main divisions. Chapter I (pp. 15-111) is organized diachronically and historically, and looks at the research history concerning Lev 11 beginning with the intertestamental period (Aristeas, Jubilees, etc.), via early Jewish and Christian interpreters, medieval Jewish and Christian interpretations and also modern interpretations. It is interesting to note that M. divides this important section along religious lines (Jewish-Christian), most probably due to the fact that religious presuppositions have resulted in distinct interpretations, although he does not state this explicitly. One would have wished in some sections (e.g., Koran [pp. 62-63],

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Hasel [p. 103], Gerstenberger [p.105] or others, whose positions are summarized in a six or seven line paragraph) more precise indications of the methodology and argumentation employed.

Chapter II (pp. 112-159) classifies the different positions in terms of their rationale and M. presents 14 different categories (ranging from arbitrary, via sociological/anthropological to hygienic/health explanations and many in-between). I found this section very useful and to the point. The final part of this chapter (pp. 149-159) is dedicated to the discussion of the nature of the laws contained in Lev 11 and prepares the way for M.'s subsequent analysis of the chapter itself. M. suggests five areas that need to be taken into consideration when discussing the applicability of Lev 11 in the context of biblical theology: (1) relationship to other Pentateuchal texts (i.e., intertextuality); (2) involved time aspects; (3) addressee of the food laws; (4) the constituent elements for the observance; and (5) a comparative study of different kinds of uncleanness in the OT.

Chapter III (pp. 160-280) is the most extensive chapter and studies the context (pp. 162-175), literary structure (pp. 176-198) and intertextuality (pp. 199-280) of Lev 11. M. suggests a chiasmic structure with an *inclusio* (p. 186). Following this, M. focuses upon four distinct Pentateuchal chapters (Gen 1, 2, 9:1-7 and Deut 14) and their lexicographical and thematic links in an intertextual context. M.'s textual work is excellent, although I would have liked to see a more thorough methodological introduction to the issue of intertextuality (which goes beyond mere quotes or allusions), since nowadays the term is in vogue and to a certain extent overused and underexplained (see here, for example, Patricia Tull Willey, *Remember the Former Things. The Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah* [SBLDS 161; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997], 57-104 who includes a welcome introduction to intertextuality in the larger context of literary studies; cf. my review in *JNES* 60.2 [2001]: 159). M. concludes that Lev 11 is closely related to Gen 1-2, especially in view of its worldview and taxonomy of animals. This suggests the universal nature of the legislation and the inherent (i.e., not acquired) clean or unclean state of the animal. Nothing is contagious, as other legislation regarding clean/unclean and pure/impure often refers to. Theologically, this concept reflects the Creation-Fall-New Creation motif present in the Pentateuch.

Chapter IV (pp. 281-348) provides a welcome discussion of the theology and rationale of Lev 11 based upon the exegetical and intertextual work undertaken in the previous chapter. Many of the numerous entries are short and to the point, although future work should develop them in more detail (e.g., the "God of order" theological motif as a sub-category of God involves 4 lines [p. 284]). For M. the doctrine of God is the basic ground for the observance of the dietary laws (p. 344). M. also interacts in this chapter with chapter II discussing the various rationales suggested for Lev 11. It is here that biblical theology is visibly at work, since M. does not only refer to the Pentateuchal texts already discussed but also looks at the much broader OT context. In some instances he even includes NT references (pp. 292, 293, 304) and in one case he (surprisingly!) refers to apocryphal texts, which describe, as a result of the observance of dietary laws, the development of moral courage (p. 343, quoting 2 Macc 6:18-31 and 4 Macc 5:1-6:30).

The book closes with a summary, conclusions and implications (pp. 349-381) with some interesting suggestions for New Testament studies connected to the issue of clean/unclean animals (pp. 369-381). M. includes a prolific 100+ page bibliography (pp. 382-484) and also ten helpful tables. Unfortunately (and as a serious flaw in academic publication), no indices are included. M. has tackled a difficult subject and has done so adequately. His history of research is very helpful and comprehensive. Also his textual, exegetical and intertextual work should be commended, although I would have wished for a more solid methodological foundation of what determines intertextual usage and what is the mere result of living and breathing the same religious and cultural background. Notwithstanding some criticisms already mentioned, the overall quality, tone and documentation makes this book a solid starting point for those studying the legislation of Lev 11 in the context of OT exegesis and theology.

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Kenton L. Sparks. *The Pentateuch: An Annotated Bibliography*. IBR Bibliographies 1. Grand Rapids, Mi.: Baker Academic, 2002.

Finding good solid resources for biblical study has always been a rigorous exercise. The task has been made more arduous in the last few decades by an explosive production of literature in the field of biblical scholarship. The IBR Bibliographies therefore represent an essential and welcome resource for students making initial forays into the daunting terrain of "secondary literature" on the Bible, pastors and teachers interested in "going deeper" into a biblical topic or text, and seasoned veterans looking for new ways into familiar issues. The present volume is an excellent contribution to the series. The editor has drawn together a well-balanced collection of longer and shorter studies that span the breadth of scholarship that has shaped and continues to shape the study of the Pentateuch. Each selection in the bibliography is accompanied by a concise 1-3 sentence summary of the argument of the work. The selections and annotations provide points for beginning study, while allow the reader to assess each work's relevance in answering his or her specific interests.

The book begins with three short chapters that list studies on the text of the Pentateuch (that is, ancient manuscripts), general introductions to the corpus, and important works on composition, authorship, and context. Chapters on specific books begin with sections that appropriate the latter two categories before moving into sections that list resources specific to the main sections of the respective books. Wedged between the Genesis and Exodus chapters is another titled "Prologemena to Exodus-Deuteronomy" which notes resources on topics of wider significance to the study of the Pentateuch. These include an extensive section on Hebrew law, as well as others on Treaty and Covenant, the History and Development of Israel's Priesthood, and the Wilderness Tradition. A brief final chapter lists a number of miscellaneous works.

Every such compilation will prompt debate on the content. For my part, I found the selections heavy on issues of composition and history and thin on studies



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representing contemporary literary approaches. This, however, reflects in part the centrality that questions of composition and history have assumed in shaping scholarship on the Pentateuch, as well as the editor's sound decision to include many important "classic" works. In short, Sparks has offered student and scholar alike an excellent bibliography, with clear and cogent annotations. It will become an indispensable resource for anyone interested in critical scholarship on the Pentateuch.

L. Daniel Hawk

Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi, eds. *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003. 350 pp., paper, \$54.00.

This is an important book for those who are involved in the academic study of the Old Testament. It examines the strengths and weaknesses and ponders the future viability of form criticism, a significant methodological approach that held sway for decades during the last century and that still has adherents today. The fact that several of the blurbs on the back cover are by well-known practitioners of this discipline—Rolf P. Knierim, Erhard S. Gerstenberger, and Gene M. Tucker—attest to the weightiness of the issues addressed.

*The Changing Face of Form Criticism* is composed of papers given at a special session in Nashville, Tennessee, in November 2000, at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature. It is divided into four parts. The first, "Theoretical Reflection," ponders the history of form criticism and its relationship to other, more modern approaches; the second group of essays brings evidence from other cultures in the ancient Near East to bear on how form criticism is practiced. Part three and four apply and critique form criticism vis-à-vis narrative and prophetic literature, respectfully.

The questioning of form criticism is not new. In fact, in their discussions a number of the contributors allude to the groundbreaking articles by James Muilenburg ("Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL* 88 [1969]:1-18) and Rolf Knierim ("Old Testament Form Criticism Reconsidered," *Interpretation* 27 [1973]:435-68). This book is a sustained critical engagement that covers a broad spectrum of views and material. Several general criticisms of form criticism as classically conceived surface time and time again. To begin with, form critics have believed that many of the literary forms in the Old Testament were originally short, oral speech forms. Accordingly, they focused on possible oral stages of transmission that lay behind texts. This concern goes back to form criticism's "founder" Hermann Gunkel, who leaned on folklore studies that even at that time were being questioned. Some scholars now doubt the existence of an oral stage for some Old Testament literature; others question the proposed hypothetical oral trajectories, and many decry the reductionism of textual analysis to brief units, when literary approaches increasingly demonstrate the coherence and aesthetics of longer passages.

In its commitment to tracing trajectories back to the supposed social setting of those oral forms (the *Sitz im Leben*), form criticism tended to highlight the typical similarities between texts as over against their unique shape and language. Texts were



squeezed into rigid molds, and forms were connected too neatly to specific origins. Simply naming the form (which sometimes seems like an exercise in simply creating a label to reflect the content of a passage) and identifying an initial social setting became the goal of exegesis and the key to interpretation. It is clear, however, on the one hand, that texts often combine and reuse a variety of forms according to their rhetorical intent; on the other hand, any *Sitz im Leben* is a theoretical construct and should be treated as such. What is more, analysis of ancient Near Eastern material demonstrates that like forms can function and grow within multiple settings.

Two other recent trends are standing form criticism on its head. Reader response theory shifts attention from theoretical origins to the reception of texts by ancient and modern readers—that is, from a fascination with what cannot be proved to a focus on an actual text. In addition, in the last number of years some scholars are proposing that much of the Old Testament should be dated to the post-exilic Persian period. This stance changes everything. Now the books of the Hebrew Bible are considered to be late literary creations by a social and religious elite, not the products of a long process of transmission.

The large number of chapters in this book (including the introduction by Sweeney, there are twenty essays) precludes my going through the argument of each. I have confined this review to surveying the consensus observations made by almost all the authors. None of them doubt that the notion of genre is fundamental to understanding texts and that these arise in certain situations. It is just that the form critical appreciation of these facts is mistaken and must be reformulated. But, if form criticism were to incorporate the necessary correctives to its central tenets as well as the data from the ancient Near East, what would it look like? Could it still be called “form criticism”? Here the contributors disagree. Some suggest its demise; most, though, call for its modification.

I would heartily recommend *The Changing Face of Form Criticism* to anyone interested in Old Testament methodologies and their history. The only major criticism I have is that this volume could have been made more user-friendly with indexes of authors and ancient sources (both biblical and ancient Near Eastern). This publisher does not include indexes in a number of its books, and in this case, a book of 350 pages, the omission detracts from a helpful resource for Old Testament scholarship.

M. Daniel Carroll R., Denver Seminary

John E. Hartley. *Genesis*. New International Biblical Commentary, Old Testament Series. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson / Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2000. 393 pp., paper, \$14.95.

Of all the books of the Hebrew Bible, Genesis certainly has a special place among Bible readers and there is no shortage of commentaries on this oft-read book. The editors of this commentary series aim the volumes at both general readers and students more acquainted with biblical studies. The background mindset of the commentaries is a “believing criticism,” which is certainly welcomed by many in the

church today. This mindset is meant to avoid the errors of heartless *aspiritual* biblical interpretation and those of unthinking, ignorant, and close-minded religious fervor. Hartley's commentary on the first book of the Bible leads the reader through Genesis with exactly these sentiments quite well. It is evident especially from the "Additional Notes" at the end of each section that he is familiar with and had thought through much scholarship on relevant topics. As for commentaries, he apparently relies on those of Cassuto and Sarna often, on that of von Rad less frequently. The aforementioned notes at the end of each section will be especially helpful to students and serious lay readers more concerned about detailed historical and archaeological data than the average reader. It is an outstanding characteristic that Hartley does not fail to mention and briefly discuss various positions on controversial issues and usually gives a judgment on them. Similarly, he does not pass over difficulties in text and there are times when *aporeia* is quite justifiable (e.g. p. 245 on 26:34). Hartley affixes a brief introduction to each pericope. These introductions are so helpful and summarizing that a reader could simply review the paragraph or two at the head of each section and thus have a good overview of the action of the book of Genesis.

Now for specifics. It is nice to see a Christian commentary accurately name the scene and activity of Genesis 22 "the binding of Isaac" (the *"qēdā"*, not "the sacrifice of Isaac" (p. 205). While discussing the name of Jacob at 25:26 (p. 238), Hartley mentions the noun *'āqēh* as a possible source for the name, but then mentions a definition "strike the heel." It is not clear exactly what he is defining here, the name Jacob or a Hebrew verb related to the root *'qb*. It is more puzzling that he cites "LXX" here with no verse number, but he is apparently referring to the Greek rendering of the hiphil of *'qb* at 27:36. Furthermore he leaves the possibility open that the meaning of Jacob's name is "based on" the cognate Arabic verb which supposedly had a sense of deception. I do not know where he finds any meaning of deception in this Arabic root. It generally means simply to follow after someone. There is a phrase *lihāja fi nafs ya'qūb*, "from secret motives," but this clearly derives from the biblical traditions about Jacob. The sense of deceive is already in Hebrew (*'āqōh* Jer. 17:9, *'ōqbā* 2 Kgs. 10:19), so there is no need to resort to Arabic. On p. 279 Hartley uses the term *paronomasia*, which probably requires definition for the general reader. There is some inconsistency in Hebrew transliteration. On p. 280 the letter *h* appears as both *kh* and *h*, while it appears as *h* on p. 152. On p. 301 Hartley argues that *yāsaḥ* means "stay," not settle, but on p. 309 that it means "settled down" in contrast to "stay" or "sojourn." Granted, these are different occurrences of the word and may well have slightly different meanings, but a direct comment to this effect would assure the reader that the author was quite alert when making these lexical comments. Overall the approach to Scripture is conservative but some readers may disagree or be uncomfortable with some of Hartley's sentiments: e.g. concession of the fact that later editors play a role in the transmission of the biblical text (p. 305) and that in Gen. 49 "over time the sayings as we have them grew and developed" (p. 356). Hartley provides many references to Egyptian practice in his discussion of the Joseph story. In his comment on Gen. 50:11 (p. 364) he affirms the meaning of the place name "Abel Mizraim" as "Mourning of Egypt" and this does, of course, comply with the opinion

expressed in the biblical text, but this is possibly an etiological description, in which case 'āḥēl means "brook," not "mourning."

All in all Hartley has done a nice job in laying out the meaning of the biblical text of Genesis in a manner easy to understand, so the average reader will have no problem accessing this commentary. There is also, though, plenty of information of interest to readers eager to delve deeper into biblical research. The greatest overall shortcoming of the writing is that Hartley often falls into the trap of simply rephrasing the biblical text without extra explanation in the main part of the commentary on each section, and the prose is not as great a pleasure to read as it could have been. Still this commentary is worth the study of readers looking for a mid-level treatment of the first book of the Bible.

Adam C. McCollum, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati

Doug McIntosh. *Deuteronomy*. Holman Old Testament Commentary, ed. Max Anders, vol. 3. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002. 386 pp., hardcover, \$19.99.

Of the many audiences for which commentaries are written, non-technical Bible teachers are often neglected. Few commentaries are designed to help these individuals craft lessons that explain the details of a text while also helping them present its overarching themes. The result is that Bible is often taught in bits and pieces without a clear presentation of its entire message. Doug McIntosh's *Deuteronomy* in the Holman Old Testament Commentary represents a step towards solving this problem.

In keeping with the approach of the entire series, this volume explains the book of Deuteronomy with a synthetic presentation of its various teaching units. Overall, the Holman Old Testament Commentary is a non-technical series. It does not include detailed discussions of original languages, history, or text criticism. It does not even include a detailed outline of the book. It is, however, replete with principles, stories, and illustrations which can help an individual apply the text. Furthermore, it tries to give the overall message of each passage without losing the reader in overwhelming detail. This is a worthy goal for its intended audience.

The book begins with an introduction that briefly surveys the traditional introductory issues: authorship, audience, date, and themes. Authorship by Moses ca. 1446 BC is defended exclusively from the Bible and the Documentary Hypothesis is quickly dismissed. Each chapter begins with an illustrative, non-biblical quote related to the theme of the section under discussion. This is followed by a short, "In a Nutshell", summary of the major theme. The text is then presented in the following manner: First, an "Introduction" which includes a story designed to illustrate the principles about to be explained. Second, a "Verse-by-Verse Commentary" on the text. Third, a "Conclusion" that gives another lengthy illustration of the main principle of the chapter. This section also includes a list of "Principles and Applications". Fourth, another illustration entitled "Life Application". Fifth, a "Prayer" centered around the central theme. Sixth, a section entitled "Deeper Discoveries" with additional information on specific background details of the text in question. Seventh, a teaching outline which provides a ready made roadmap



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for teaching this passage. Finally, a section entitled "Issues for Discussion" which gives several questions designed to stimulate further study, or interaction in a group setting.

This complicated outline conceals several useful features. The commentary includes a significant number of illustrations that are tailored to go with the texts in question. Many of them are engaging stories. In addition, keen attention is paid to the central theme of the passages in question. Each section begins with a short statement of the "Main Idea" of the chapter. Then as the various sections of a chapter are discussed each includes its own "Supporting Idea" which fits back into the "Main Idea". This is important for giving readers a view of the forest not just the trees. Finally, it goes out of its way to highlight the spiritual element in personal study. This is a significant emphasis often neglected in commentaries.

The most significant deficiency of this commentary is that it presents Deuteronomy exclusively according to (non-inspired) chapter divisions. Although this approach is convenient, it obscures themes that extend across chapter lines. For example, Deuteronomy 16:18-18:22 deals with the officials to be appointed in the promised land: judges, priests, and kings. Instead of presenting this material as one block, as many commentaries do, McIntosh divides it into three chapters. This conceals the connection between the judges in chapter 16 and the work that they must do in chapter 17. In addition it makes it harder for the reader to see that the theme of leadership binds this entire section together. Essentially this commentary only gives us a chapter level view of Deuteronomy, not a synthesis of the entire book.

Perhaps just as significant, the lists of principals included in each section seem to be a bit forced and at times simply false. For example, the list that concludes the discussion of Deuteronomy 16 includes the principal that "A good memory is one of the most precious assets of spiritual living"(205). The chapter on Deuteronomy 12 includes, "Rejoicing is the essence of genuine worship. A sad face (apart from remorse for sin or regret concerning the pain of others) is an affront to a gracious and generous God" (164). Finally, although the commentary is based on the NIV, it includes neither the text of the NIV nor an author's translation.

These deficiencies aside, this commentary should help its intended audience: non-technical Bible teachers. As a collection of illustrations alone it is worth the price. It should also fit the needs of the beginning student of the Bible for several reasons. In as much as students approach Deuteronomy with fear and trepidation, a textbook like this, with its many stories, can make commentary reading more palatable. As an introduction to deeper investigation, this book would be useful in contexts where students are getting their first taste of such literature. The illustrations keep concentrated study from becoming too "deep" for the beginning student. Those who are further along in their studies will find that much detail is lacking, but the volume does include a brief bibliography and a glossary of terms. The emphasis on the main idea is helpful for avoiding atomistic descriptions of the text that do not address what the passage is ultimately about. Finally, there is a distinctly "inspirational" flavor to this work which makes it suitable for devotional reading while at the same time providing more substance



than many devotionals do. Overall I would recommend this as an introductory commentary to Deuteronomy.

Steven H. Sanchez

J. Gordon Harris, Cheryl Anne Brown, and Michael S. Moore. *Joshua, Judges, Ruth*. New International Biblical Commentary, Old Testament Series. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers /Carlisle, England: Paternoster Press, 2000. 398 pp, paper, .

It is no surprise to find these three biblical books treated together in a single volume. Three different authors wrote the commentaries for the three books, though, and a reader may easily study only a single commentary of the three with profit, i.e. the commentaries are not interwoven or referenced together to make unified treatment of the three books. That being the case, after discussing the introduction, I will review each section separately and then conclude with an overall assessment.

In the general introduction J. Harris explains, "The authors of these three commentaries take a canonical-historical approach to the books, viewing the books as a whole and relating them to other books in the canon" (xv). There is more "viewing the books as a whole" than "relating them to other books in the canon," with the exception of the Pentateuch. References to the New Testament are especially lacking. Admittedly, though, the extreme of citing every conceivable parallel and similarity would be too much for the intended audience of this commentary series. The structure of each section in the commentaries is as follows: introduction, commentary (Scripture quotations, which are printed in bold type, are worked into the discussion, not cited in as complete pericopes), additional notes (philological comments, textual criticism remarks, archaeological information, specific scholarly discussion), excursus. In the section entitled *Further Reading* at the end of the book one finds a list of commentaries arranged by biblical book, sources to study the geography of mentioned places, and miscellaneous articles. Subject and scripture indices conclude the book. The commentary is based on but certainly not confined to the NIV; commentators occasionally find fault with the NIV and offer their own translation, for example (p. 330). A map or maps would be a helpful addition to the book since there are so many references to places and traveling.

Pages 3-120 contain the commentary on Joshua by J. Gordon Harris. On p. 19 Harris remarks that <sup>a</sup>*dōnāy* is literally "Lord," but *literally* it is "my lords." On p. 20 (cf. p. 17) Harris comments, "Joshua grieves the loss of his friend Moses," but there is no great textual evidence for such a claim. Joshua probably did grieve after Moses' death, but to insert such an idea into the text of the Hebrew Bible misrepresents the character of the literature. The commentator makes a good point about the double meanings of the verbs "enter," and "lie down" in 2:1 (p. 27). On the same page, though, he uses the term "literal" in an incorrect and pointless way. He claims that "enter" is literally "go into" and "consecrate yourselves" is literally "make yourselves holy" (p. 33). He is, of course, quite right if he intends to give English synonyms for the respective translations, but is it correct to use the term "literal" to describe a Latinate word or phrase in English with a Germanic one? I think not. The verb "enter" literally means "enter," and the phrase

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"consecrate yourselves" literally means just that. *bā* and *hitqaddeš* may be equally rendered by "enter" and "go into" for the first word and "consecrate oneself" or "sanctify oneself" for the second. Harris mentions on p. 31 a certain view of Josephus and "the Targums" (as if they were all alike!) but gives no reference whatsoever. I find Harris's comment on the absence of any division between sacred and secular in "all of life" for ancient people (p. 45) too broad to be realistic. On p. 112 Harris fails to point out a significant connection between the beginning of the book of Joshua (1:8) and this speech at its end (23:6). Making known this kind of literary parallel in the Bible would certainly urge readers to appreciate the literary quality of the Bible more than most readers probably do. "A epilogue" on p. 117 should be "An epilogue."

Harris does make some worthy contributions to the study of the book of Joshua, though, contributions that will be understandable and welcome to the intended audience of the commentary series. Biblical interpretation with a strong allegorical bent is sometimes characteristic of unlearned preaching and Harris urges against this sort of treatment regarding the scarlet cord of Joshua 2 (p. 29). Harris does not take very frequent opportunity to connect the text to the life of today's Christian, but he does occasionally do so. On p. 88 he offers a relevant application from Caleb's behavior that will be useful to almost every human being: everyone who grows old.

Cheryl A. Brown authored the commentary on Judges (pp. 123-289). According to Brown cutting off body parts of captives "was commonly practiced in antiquity" (p. 142). At least a single reference is necessary for such a claim but she gives none. On p. 146 she claims "The principle of *talion*...appears frequently in early Jewish and Christian literature." Again not a single example is given. Given the intended audience of this series a definition of haplography and homoioteleuton would be helpful, and the use of the word *Vorlage* should be avoided (p. 164). In her comments on 4:4 (p.171) Brown points to the word order, i.e. placing Deborah's name first, as calling attention to Deborah's stature as a leader. This is incorrect: Deborah's name is at the beginning of a disjunctive clause, and this is normal word order for this type of sentence. A few pages later (p. 174), though, Brown gives a very good example of how understanding Hebrew syntax correctly, particularly with regard to word order, makes accurate understanding and translation possible. On p. 208 Brown mistakenly says that in 9:21 "his brother" precedes "Abimelech" and that "Abimelech" is the final word of the pericope and therefore is in an "emphatic" position. She is simply wrong here. The last word is *'āhīw*, "his brother," and it is not "emphatic"—a notoriously vague term; if it were "emphatic" it would not be so merely because it is the last word of the sentence and pericope. Similarly Brown claims without any specific reference that the Hebrew of "Why have you come up today?" (12:3) is emphatic (p. 234). I fail to see anything out of the ordinary in the text. Her comment on 19:13 (p. 276) is completely unnecessary. Brown makes a difference between "spend the night" and "lodge" but then says, "the meaning is the same." Why waste the ink by making such a pointless distinction? Finally, on p. 243 "the is" should be "this is."

Brown's exposition has some beneficial marks. Her comparison between Judges 2:2 and Genesis 3:13 (p. 152) encourages reading the Bible with a keen literary eye. In Brown's comment on 15:11 (p. 252) her personal note deriving from her

experience with people of Central and Eastern Europe after the fall of communism is good and brings an experiential and devotional quality to her commentary that would be welcome elsewhere in the book as well. Her application of 17:7-13 (pp. 263-264) impacts the common human tendency to control God. Such application spread throughout the commentary would have improved its usefulness in the life of the church.

The commentary by Michael S. Moore (or Michael J. Moore, as he is called on the back of the book?) on Ruth fills the final major portion of the book (pp. 293-373). A few shortcomings stand out in Moore's handling of the book of Ruth. Although he frequently mentions canonical context and points out the verbal parallel between Ruth 3:11 and Proverbs 31:10, Moore makes no comment on the placement of the book of Ruth in the Hebrew Bible, where it immediately follows Proverbs. This arrangement supports Moore's insistence of the canonical context's significance, though he fails to point it out to the reader. On p. 303 he quotes Goethe and Peterson (apparently E. Peterson, noted in the bibliography—Moore does not say) without giving any title or page number. Later (p. 318) Moore assumes without comment that the LXX and the Masoretic text had an identical base. On p. 347 Moore makes a lexical misstep: he comments, "Naomi sees herself as Ruth's wall of defense," based on supposed cognates of the word *hāmōt*. There is no strong reason to connect the word for mother-in-law with a noun "wall" or a verb "to protect." The names of family members (father, mother, son, etc.) are usually primitive, i.e. do not derive from verbs or other nouns. Second, the text does not indicate exactly how Naomi sees herself and psychological speculation has no place in serious biblical interpretation. The commentator is here stretching to comment where no comment is needed.

Before concluding I must note the incredibly inconsistent transliteration practice in this volume. The citing of Hebrew words is far from infrequent and so such inconsistency shows itself throughout the three commentaries. Perhaps the common practice of giving the Hebrew word for something is meant to impress the reader but what left an impression on me was this poor example of editing, which is, of course, most important in a composite work such as this three-part commentary. Here are the problems: *h* is *kh* in Ruth, *h* in Joshua and Judges and on pp. 304, 328, 333, and 368 *h* is both *h* and *kh*! *š* is *sh* (p. 261, 267) and *s* (p. 20, 264) in Judges, *sh* in Joshua and Ruth; *k* even appears as *kh* in Judges (p. 212); ' and ' are both merely a single straight quotation mark. On p. 248 (on Judges 14:18) is a great mistake: the supposedly different words—relevant to the point the author makes—look the same according to the transliteration system (or rather lack of it) used in this book! All this ambiguity and inconsistency is present yet the publishers are able to produce the diacritic mark in the name Ḥubur on p. 310. The word *gūnā* is transliterated two different ways on pp. 317-318. *sēdāqā* is transliterated two different ways on pp. 126 and 129. Long, short, and half vowels are not distinguished (except on p. 318). If mentioning the Hebrew words is so important as to be a frequent occurrence, as it apparently is in this commentary, it is worth doing correctly and consistently. The practice evident in this commentary inspires little confidence to the attentive reader.

This volume of three commentaries provides a very basic guide for laypeople, beginning students and pastors who are untrained in biblical backgrounds and languages



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or who have forgotten much of their training. This commentary stands up in a mediocre manner to a test of the stated goals of the NIBC. Its shortcomings are the paucity of references to classical theology, the few attempts to apply the text to Christian living, the apparent carelessness of some affirmations (see above), and the very inconsistent way it mentions Hebrew words. On the positive side, appropriate to the intended audience of the series, the reports of recent scholarship are given in such a way that all but the most timid readers will in no way be intimidated by them. The "believing criticism" of this series, accurately reflected in this volume, will be welcome among most conservative and moderate readers. Some very conservative readers might have problems with certain parts of the commentaries, though. For example, Brown (p. 130) affirms that "there was probably no single author or editor" of the book of Judges. In accordance with the stated goals of this commentary series references to Christian interpretation abound (e.g. pp. 42, 123-124, 177—more comment is needed here—and 221).

Adam C. McCollum

James Limburg, *Psalms*. Louisville:Westminster John Knox Press, 2000. 509 pp., paper, \$29.95.

This work is a delightfully insightful, comprehensive commentary on the Psalms. Written for church members and church school teachers it is a solid scholarly piece. Clear, insightful commentary is found throughout without the visible intricacies of exegesis. Within one finds exquisite interpretation. Every Psalm is treated in an engaging manner from the text of the New Revised Standard Version.

Intriguing titles are assigned each Psalm such as:

The Way To Go; Plotting Politicians; Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep; How Does It All Fit Together; V Is For Victory; Why Pray When You Can Worry; When Good Things Happen To Bad People; It's About Time; The ABC's Of Faith; From King David To Duke Ellington.

The author is Professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul Minnesota. The work is offered to members of the church and as an aid to teachers of church school classes. This series, "Westminster Bible Companion," is intended to assist church members in reading the Bible more clearly. This means clarifying historical and geographical data, defining obscure words and determining the fundamental meaning of the passage. This is no frothy treatment of the Psalms. The scholarship underlying this work is substantial. Overflowing with great insight, the author views the Psalms as a hymnbook, prayer book and as instruction for living. All of this originates in real-life situations. The author utilizes the "canonical method" of viewing each Psalm in its literary context of neighboring Psalms or the specific collection in which it appears.

The introduction is short, helpful and instructive. The "Content" lists each Psalm in numerical order with its captivating title. The Bibliography is very limited. While written primarily for church members in a very readable style, the work is filled to overflowing with insights for any and every reader.

Richard E. Allison



Trent C. Butler, *Holman Old Testament Commentary: Isaiah*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002. Xii + 387 pp., hardback, \$19.99.

The *Holman Old Testament Commentary Series* edited by Max Anders is one of the most helpful biblical resources for local church Bible study. Trent C. Butler's work on Isaiah exemplifies this as he presents a clear and concise commentary on Isaiah geared towards the lay teacher or student. Packed with teaching points, anecdotes, prayers, and applications for the Christian life, Butler capitalizes upon *Holman's* format to provide a commentary that offers a good foundation and framework for personal or group study of Isaiah.

Butler supplies an excellent introduction to the commentary which familiarizes the reader with important issues related to Isaiah in particular, and prophetic texts in general. He is very straightforward with his audience in presenting his reasons for holding a single-author position with Isaiah, and helpfully explains the multi-authorship position in turn. He also artfully avoids using scholarly language in his discussion. For instance, instead of presenting "form-critical characteristics" that may be found in the texts of the prophets, Butler uses the concept and terminology of "language formulas" and "major linguistic tools of the prophetic trade." The author's ability to discuss relevant scholarly topics in a user-friendly and lucid manner is evident from the beginning of the commentary.

One of the most valuable traits of the commentary is Butler's work in the sections entitled, "Deeper Discoveries." In these discussions Butler provides helpful information on key theological terms and biblical concepts that contributes to a greater understanding of Isaiah and Scripture as a whole.

Butler's emphatic historical focus is very obvious from the beginning of the commentary. He supplies a detailed chart outlining the periods of foreign power (Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian) relevant to the text of Isaiah. In his discussion of the tripartite nature of Isaiah's message, Butler appoints precise historical eras to the larger sections of Isaiah. He notes, "The book presents this one prophet as having a message featuring events of his own day (chs. 1-39; about 740 to 690 B.C.), events in the days of Cyrus of Persia (chs. 40-55; 559-530 B. C.), and events in the days after the temple had been rebuilt (chs. 56-66; 515-480 B.C. or so)" [3]. And, in Butler's interpretation of Isa 1-39, he also attempts to pinpoint particular years of history that coincide with particular sermons and pericopes of Isaiah.

Though it is helpful to know something of the historical background of Isaiah's day and beyond, such historical information does not bear as heavily on the text and message of Isaiah as Butler leads his readers to believe. Butler's over-preoccupation for grounding Isaiah's message to actual history unduly influences the thrust of his interpretation at times. For example, in his discussion of Chapters 56 and 57 Butler notes, "The temple was finished and dedicated in 515 B.C. The prophetic sermons in Isaiah 56-66 deal with the problems of this period of history..." [321]. Though this may be a valid assumption, Butler fails to emphasize any eschatological and ideological force

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of the message. Both should be appropriately weighed when interpreting Isaiah, especially the latter parts of the book. Isaiah does possess explicit historical keys from which one's interpretation should take its cues. But, the dynamics of Isaiah's message can be stifled when one attempts to dig behind the text for historical precision. Butler seems to realize this himself when discussing the ambiguity in the identity of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53. He comments, "He [Isaiah] wanted us to seek the message that the text seeks to bring to his audience with his poem and to see how that message can continue to speak to us in light of our experiences with God" [296]. Unfortunately, Butler rarely takes such caution in other parts of Isaiah's message. This is not surprising however when one reads an initial comment concerning his role as commentator, "We understand the preacher and his message better when we know when, where, and to whom he preached. Most prophetic words do not directly state where and when they were preached. It is the work of the commentator to help us find this information" [6-7]. This sort of attitude concerning the responsibility of the commentator to *find* historical links potentially detaches an interpretation from the intent of the text. Butler's historical connections move beyond what is necessary for a conservative, historical understanding of Isaiah.

Though these points need to be kept in mind when working with the commentary, Butler's work is still valuable for appreciating the message of Isaiah, and, for providing a head start in any teaching setting. In fact, the total package of the commentary qualifies this as the first resource to recommend for providing a conservative presentation of Isaiah for study in a local church environment.

Steven D. Mason, University of St. Andrews, Scotland

Kenneth E. Bailey, *Jacob and the Prodigal: How Jesus Retold Israel's Story*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003. 224 pp., paper, \$17.00.

Kenneth E. Bailey is a captivating and provocative author and lecturer in Middle Eastern New Testament Studies. Anything he writes is chockfull of new insights on New Testament studies. In addition to a doctorate in New Testament he also holds graduate degrees in the Arabic language. He has not only mastered the scholarly literature and has an intimate understanding of ancient texts, especially Arabic and eastern ones, but also has tremendous insight into Middle Eastern cultures. This was acquired through living for over forty years in Egypt, Lebanon, Jerusalem and Cyprus.

His special interest through the years has been the parable in Luke chapter 15. Though three in appearance, they are one as the text indicates (Luke 15.3). The work begins by establishing the authenticity of the text as a historical record. Then he moves to an exposition of the importance of an understanding of Middle Eastern culture for New Testament interpretation. This is necessary since we all bring cultural assumptions to the hermeneutical process. Bailey compares one's usual efforts to "pushing a bus in which we are riding."

Bailey rejects the ideas that the parable is an allegory or simply a "delivery system" for an idea. Instead he defines a parable as "a perception of reality that we are

asked to inhabit." His approach to Luke 15 is to see three parallel stories including the good shepherd, the good woman and the good father. All three are to be understood as symbols of God, and all evolve into symbols of Jesus and formulate a reply to the critical statement made by the scribes and the Pharisees. It needs to be remembered that Jesus is not addressing the crowd but the scholars (Luke 15.2). To them, Jesus is presenting himself as shepherd, mother and father. The lost items are sheep, coin and sons. God is like the shepherd who goes looking for the lost sheep, like the woman (another side of God) who searches for the lost coin, and like the father who actively seeks reconciliation with his two lost sons. One is a lawbreaker and the other is a law keeper, but they are both wayward sons estranged from the father.

Bailey's thesis is that Jesus creates the parable of the prodigal from the story line of Jacob. This idea of a new story from the outline of an old, well known story arises from the practice of the sages and is found explicitly in Jubilees. This recreation by Jesus is for the present situation (Luke 15.1-3), and for the future. Generally the two stories follow the same outline of exile and return. Jesus reshapes the old and the new stories to explain who he is to the criticizing scholars and for all time.

Bailey substantiates his thoughts by identifying fifty-one points of comparison and contrast from the two stories. These are organized under three major sections: 1. Dramatic material that appears in each account in nearly the same way.

2. Dramatic material that appears in each account where the reuse in the parable shows some significant revision.

3. Dramatic material that appears in each account but is reversed or radically changed as it appears in the parable.

Interwoven throughout are references to twenty-nine early Jewish sources.

This is a fascinating study of intertextuality that leads to new treasures in biblical study.

Richard Allison

David Alan Black and David S. Dockery, eds. *Interpreting the New Testament: Essays on Methods and Issues*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001. 565pp., paper, \$29.99.

*Interpreting the New Testament* (henceforth *INT*) is a revised edition of the 1991 volume *New Testament Criticism and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), also edited by Black and Dockery. Like the original volume the purpose of *INT* "is to enhance New Testament interpretation, teaching, and preaching by providing a useful means of learning what the New Testament is all about and – whenever possible – the historical reasons why it speaks the way it does. It endeavors not only to acquaint readers with the scope and trends of modern New Testament scholarship but also to enable them to have a clearer and more enjoyable experience when reading and applying these twenty-seven inspired books" (ix). This revised edition includes many of the previous essays, though updated and sometimes rewritten, as well as a few new contributions. The book has three parts: Introduction, Basic Methods in New Testament Interpretation, and Special Issues in New Testament Interpretation. Throughout these three parts there are 22 chapters each



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written by a different scholar who is competent in the area of discussion. Before we evaluate the book's value, a survey of the three parts and their contents is in order.

The first part of *INT*, "Introduction," is very brief with only two chapters. The first chapter consists of a general introduction to the authority, hermeneutics, and criticism of the New Testament. The second chapter consists of a historical survey of New Testament interpretation. These chapters helpfully orientate the reader to the second part of *INT* where various methods of interpretation will be shown in relation to the text of the New Testament.

The second part of *INT*, "Basic Methods in New Testament Interpretation," deals individually with six primary "methods" of New Testament study: textual criticism, source criticism, form criticism, redaction criticism, literary criticism, sociological criticism. These six chapters provide an excellent account of the use, importance, and history of each of these methods in the interpretation of the New Testament. Since each of these areas could have their own monograph, the authors succinctly place the methods in the history of interpretation and provide up-to-date examples of their usefulness in various texts. The chapter on sociological criticism is especially helpful since it has become one of the most popular methods in current study of the New Testament. Its placement at the end of the six methods does well to highlight its relation yet attempted improvement to what was lacking in the other more "historical" approaches.

The third part of *INT*, "Special Issues in New Testament Interpretation," covers several issues common to modern research in the New Testament. Unlike the second part, this part discusses issues that are often unrelated and diverse in their application. It begins with a chapter on the study of New Testament background, followed by several studies on the New Testament as literature: the use of the Old Testament in the New, the study of New Testament Greek, the study of discourse analysis, and a study of the various literary genres found within the New Testament documents. The next chapter deals with the historical and literary problem of authorship and the role pseudonymity in the New Testament. The next six chapters offer interpretive method for specific books or grouping of books: Synoptic Gospels, Gospel of John, book of Acts, Pauline epistles, general epistles, and the book of Revelation. These six chapters deal with hermeneutical issues pertinent to the individual books themselves. Finally, the remaining two chapters deal with the explication of the methods already discussed: theology and preaching.

*INT* is a successful introduction to the task of interpreting the New Testament. It offers both a broad range of basic methodological and introductory issues, as well as more book specific chapters that assist with detailed aspects of interpretation. Since no approach to the New Testament is neutral, *INT* comes from a more conservative perspective. They begin with the assumption that the documents are not merely useful for a reproducing history or one group's beliefs and values, but are "inspired" (ix) and God's very word. The volume admits that "these essays comprise a representative cross section of current evangelical New Testament scholarship that seeks to be responsible to the supernatural revelation of the New Testament while at the same time keeping abreast of current issues, trends, and methodologies" (ix). Although such a position is necessarily limiting, the majority of the chapters are not polemically conservative. The methods described are useful for a broad readership.



As *INT* itself proclaims the book is designed primarily for students of the New Testament in colleges and seminaries, but also is useful for pastors and lay people who desire to become better acquainted with important issues of New Testament study and interpretation. Although some issues would seem complex to a lay person, it would seem that *INT* was successful. The book is well formatted and provides a helpful bibliography at the end of each chapter that is related to the topic at hand. The use of endnotes rather than footnotes makes the volume more inviting to less-experienced readers of studies on the New Testament. It is also a very affordable volume for the amount of material it covers.

Study of the New Testament in the beginning of the twenty-first century is becoming more and more complex. That this is so is confirmed by the amount of "introductory" works being published concerning the New Testament and the general study of the Bible in the last few years. The complexity of the various methods of study of the New Testament, and the growing history of such methods, requires explanation for new and intermediate students of the New Testament. Fitting well in this "introductory" genre, *INT* provides a current, evangelical, and up-to-date introduction to the methods of New Testament interpretation.

Edward W. Klink III, University of St. Andrews, Scotland

A. Andrew Das. *Paul, the Law, and the Covenant*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2001. Pp. xix + 342. Paper. \$24.95.

"Paul, the Law, and the Covenant" is a PhD dissertation born under the supervision of Paul Achtemeier at Union Theological Seminary. It is a critical assessment in the line of the ongoing debate about the limits and extent of the E.P. Sander's thesis as proposed in his monumental *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* and the New Perspective on Paul that has emerged from it.

Throughout chapters 1-2, against Sanders, Das argues that a number of Intertestamental, Apocalyptic and Tannaitic texts argue in favor of the understanding that the Jews held the idea of a "perfect obedience of the Law". Chapters 3-5 explore Sander's key motifs of covenant, election, and sacrifice in attempting to answer the question whether Paul can be understood as a covenantal nomist. According to Das, nowhere we find Paul adopting and affirming the categories of the Covenantal Nomism.

By examining the key passage Gal. 3:10, Das argues that this verse is best understood if read as a "first century Pharisaic witness to the second-century rabbinic tradition of *legal perfectionism*" (pg.170). Rom 2 can provide data for arguing in favor of understanding the "works of the Law" as an ethnic boundary marker. Instead of embracing the polarized "either/or" approach, he opts for a "both-and" relationship by which he hopes to get a more coherent picture of the problem. In chapter 8, Das moves his focus to Rom 3:27-4:8 as a key *topos* where the "works of the law" are discussed. Here he presents a contextual reading of 3:27 as an integral part of the wider literary context. His conclusion is that what Paul has in mind here (and everywhere else) is a certain understanding of the Law that seeks human efforts in order to be fulfilled.

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Chapter 9 is the next "bench test" of Das' thesis. Here he contrasts the seemingly contradictory passages Phil 3:2-9 and Romans 7. In respect to the former, he provides a discussion of the term "blameless" and its implications for Das' argument. When Paul uses the term "blameless" he does not argue in favor of the "gracious framework of Judaism". Instead Paul can say that he is blameless only in respect to the *observable* aspect of the Law. If this is correct, then there is no real tension between Phil 3:2-9 and Rom 7. In his final chapter Das offers a rereading of the Rom 9-11 especially against Dunn's interpretation in his commentary on Romans in WBC. After offering a critique of the Dunn's reading of this text, Das gives another reading of the text. For Paul, as Das argues, human effort is all that was left when the Christ-Event became decisively salvific. It is through this new hermeneutical center that Paul now redefines the categories of election, covenant, and the Law.

Das has succeeded in producing a book that has made a contribution towards a more precise understanding of the first-century Judaism and Pauline writings. However at several points it needs a greater precision and clarification. First, it does not leave room for any large-scale tensions in Paul. At a couple of points it seems like Paul was forced to be consistent and unambiguous. This however is very unlikely when we bear in mind the occasional nature of the Pauline letters. In this respect, it was probably worth taking as an option that "blameless" in Phil 3:2-9 might have been used as a "rhetorical device" - for the sake of the argument without Paul infusing heavy theological connotations in it.

In respect to chapter five, a more extended discussion on the place of atoning sacrifice in Pauline thought would have been welcomed. Personally, I would have wanted to hear more on the possible implications of Paul's interpretation of Christ's death as the Suffering Servant. I do not think that an affirmative answer to the question of Paul's interpretation of Christ's death as an *atonement sacrifice* would have drastically undermined the description that Das' offers.

This book is a detailed and careful study that takes into consideration the main line of thought in recent Pauline scholarship. However, it refuses to be "uncritical", accepting its findings as final. For that reason, Das offers a valuable contribution to the ongoing debate. However, while reading this book we are reminded that Sander's Covenantal Nomism is still waiting for a "newer perspective," that will look at the "patterns of religion of *both* Judaism and Paul" from thirty years of distance. Whoever will have the depth and breadth to undertake that project would well served by consulting "Paul, the Law, and the Covenant."

Nikola Galevski, Regent College, Vancouver, BC

Bart D. Ehrman, *Lost Scriptures: Books that Did Not Make It into the New Testament*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. Vi. + 342 pages, cloth, \$30.00.

*Lost Scriptures* provides a readily available and accessible collection of Christian texts from the second through the fourth centuries CE, some republished here in their entirety, some available here only as selections. Ehrman has included many of the important witnesses to emerging Gnostic Christianity, ascetic streams of Christianity, as

well as proto-orthodox Christianity, though the Apostolic Fathers are on the whole poorly represented in this collection (though these are readily available in other collections edited by Ehrman). The collection groups works by genres in the same order as the New Testament: extra-canonical Gospels, Acts, Epistolary Literature, and Apocalypses, concluding with early witnesses to the formation of an authoritative canon of New Testament writings.

There is an unmistakable agenda behind the collection of these writings, namely an attempt to level the playing field, as it were, turning back the clock to a period in which "orthodox" Christianity was but one group among many vying for the right, as it were, to define what Christianity was. Gnostics, Docetists, and ascetics should not be thought of as "heresy" (which Ehrman equates with "false belief," though "divisive faction" would be more apt), but as promoters of competing understandings of Jesus' significance and message. The introduction to the collection positions readers to experience the expressions of faith in the various documents as fundamentally "equal," without giving due notice to the unequal geographic and demographic distribution of these views, an inequality that would support the traditional view that there was in fact a broad consensus regarding the apostolic message and elite or sectarian groups that "split" from this consensus to pursue their own adaptations of the Gospel. The process of canonization, a process of selection that is now recognized largely to have proceeded from the ground up rather than to have been imposed on a broad-minded, inquiring, and tolerant church from above, is much more susceptible to the traditional rather than this revisionist view of diversity in the early church.

Such tendencies aside, Ehrman is to be commended as always for investing his considerable energies into putting the primary texts in the hands of the general reader. The study of early Christianity should certainly not be limited to the reading of the New Testament, but must extend to the careful study of the apostolic fathers and the literature collected in this volume. This treasure trove of primary sources was published primarily to complement the reading of his *Lost Christianities* (New York and Oxford: OUP, 2003), but it would serve equally well as a complement to the reader's independent exploration of the varieties of expression of the Christian faith in the first three to four centuries.

David A. deSilva

T. R. Glover, *Paul of Tarsus*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2002. 256 pp. \$19.95.

With technological innovation once again impressing upon the literary world, there is a glut of classic reprints hitting bookstore shelves. For theological studies, this has meant a re-introduction of almost forgotten and dearly loved movements in theological development. Hendrickson has seized this moment to reprint T. R. Glover's important historical treatise of Paul. What is striking about Glover's work, and perhaps timely, is that his unwavering placement of Paul within his Greco-Roman context is counter-intuitive to much of Pauline studies today. Furthermore, Glover's belief that Paul



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is best interpreted by Luther provides an intriguing comment to a generation that seeks to deconstruct the traditional view of Paul.

It is helpful to be reminded of good work that goes against the grain of today's assumptions and provides even the slightest reminder that although Paul is to be understood as thoroughly Jewish, his Hellenistic context should not be ignored. It is not that the classicist Glover ignores Paul's Jewish context—he is surprisingly positive and fair to Paul's Hebrew instincts—it is just that Glover's instincts seem a little archaic after the Holocaust and post-Stendahl, Davies, and Sanders. Could it be that Glover's work will fan the flames of the counter-New Perspective movement and give impetus for those who assert a Lutheran-Augustinian view of Paul? Only time can tell. Certainly, however, the importance of this religious historian warrants that *Paul of Tarsus* is to be read by those who seek to get to the heart of Paul's social realities. Even in his most antiquated moments, like in his chapter on Christology, Glover somehow manages to poetically and theologically connect with the core of Paul's sensibilities. Most of all, it is a splendid read by a professional layman and critical lover of Paul, who brings a level of literary and historical depth to the study that is sometimes neglected.

Brenton Dickieson, Regent College, Vancouver, BC.

Robert M. Grant. *Paul in the Roman World: the Conflict at Corinth*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. 181 pages. pb \$19.95.

Robert Grant taught for many years at the University of Chicago Divinity School. He is best known for his decades of publishing, particularly in studies of the Greco-Roman world and of the second century church – both Gnostics and catholic fathers.

This work is meant to introduce readers to Roman Corinth as Paul would have known it. It is divided into three sections: Business and Politics; Religion and Ritual; Paul on Sexuality. The third section, with its background of marriage, incest (cp. 1 Cor. 5:1), divorce, and childrearing is the most useful. Another study of particular value is chapter 4, "Some Contemporaries," where Grant compares the apostle with Demetrius the Cynic, Musonius Rufus, and Seneca. His focus begins to stray when he makes certain second-century Gnostics to be Paul's contemporaries. His slips into the next century also include Dionysius, bishop of Corinth in the 170s.

Grants other works will eclipse *Paul in the Roman World*. While it brings together some useful information, the analysis is on occasion superficial and at times simply in error (*viz.*, he seems to imply that the thousand temple prostitutes of Aphrodite were still at work in Roman Corinth, p. 20). He gives a good overview of the views on abortion in the first century, but does not make the important distinction between abortifacients (herbal or chemical aids to induce miscarriage) and preventive birth control. At times the work seems rag-tag and in need of a careful editor. For example, there is no conclusion and no serious introduction; and chapters 6-7 on liturgy in Corinth and in the second century church – while interesting for Corinthian studies generally – do not bear enough relation to the Roman background of the city in Paul's day.



We might recommend the work for a seminary class on Corinthians, although Murphy O'Connor's *St. Paul's Corinth* or Bruce Winter's *After Paul Left Corinth* are more helpful and coherent.

Gary S. Shogren, San José, Costa Rica

Andreas J. Köstenberger. *Studies on John and Gender: A Decade of Scholarship*. Studies in Biblical Literature 38. New York: Peter Lang, 2001. 378 pp., hardback, \$67.95.

Andreas Köstenberger is well known within Johannine scholarship. From his doctoral dissertation onwards he has been researching and widely publishing in the Gospel of John. With the exception of chapter three, this volume is a collection of some of his previous essays on the Fourth Gospel published between 1991 and 2000, hence the subtitle: "A Decade of Scholarship."

The book is divided into two parts. The first part deals with various issues in Johannine studies, chapters 1-8. Chapter one discusses the primary introductory issues of the Fourth Gospel: historical setting, literary features, and the theological emphases found in John. Chapter two incorporates research in the precursors of critical scholarship on John's Gospel, focusing on the period from 1790 to 1810. Chapter three, the only essay not published elsewhere, compares the Gospel accounts of Jesus' anointing with the application of verbal aspect theory. Chapters four and five are two detailed studies on important Johannine themes: Jesus as a rabbi and the Johannine "signs." Chapter six deals specifically with the reference to "greater works" of the believer found in John 14:12. Chapter seven is a lexical study of the two primary Johannine verbs for sending. Finally, chapter eight discusses a Johannine biblical theology of mission, flowing from Köstenberger's published dissertation.

The second part of the book deals specifically with various issues in reference to gender, chapters 9-15. Chapter nine offers a critical review of the thesis that priestly celibacy is of apostolic origin. Chapter ten investigates whether or not the reference to "mystery" indeed relates to the sacrament of marriage. Chapter eleven offers hermeneutical method in the study of gender roles in the New Testament. The next three chapters, twelve to fourteen, deal specifically with the crucial passage on gender: 1 Timothy 2:9-15. Finally, chapter fifteen offers a comprehensive analysis of women in the Pauline mission.

Although this collection of essays is clearly intended for an evangelical audience, "scholars who disagree with Köstenberger's arguments will at the same time find his scholarship engaging." Köstenberger is upfront about combining the work of scholarship with the work of the church. This volume combines a good example of biblical exegesis with a theological reading of the text taken from the evangelical tradition. Köstenberger's detailed exegetical work in specific pericopae provides an example for all to follow. In part one, Köstenberger covers some of the most important issues in the study of the Fourth Gospel. That alone provides an excellent survey of the issues in Johannine studies over the last decade. In part two, Köstenberger is unafraid to

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deal with potentially the most difficult issue in the church today: gender. Dealing with both Catholic and Protestant exegesis, Köstenberger tackles some of the most pressing pericopae in the entire discussion of gender. Part two provides both a survey of important issues and passages, as well as a humble presentation of one option within the evangelical tradition.

*Studies on John and Gender: A Decade of Scholarship* would be a valuable addition to all students of John. But this book's most valuable contribution may be to those who are attempting to deal with the issue of gender in both the academy and the church. Although Köstenberger's answer may not be agreed upon by all, his attempt to break the impasse and deal with the difficult pericopae is an excellent example to follow.

Edward W. Klink, III

Gerd Lüdemann, *Paul: The Founder of Christianity*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2002. 292 pp., paper, \$22.00.

Journalist A. N. Wilson has recently caused a stir in the popular media with his beautifully written and historically improbable, *Paul: The Mind of the Apostle*. The unconventional Gerd Lüdemann now offers an eclectic synthesis of two decades of research with a similar thesis: Paul's gospel, not Jesus' proclamation, is the primary basis for the Christian claim to truth.

In historical reconstruction Lüdemann desires "to discover what [Paul] really did, wanted, thought, and felt (10)." Lüdemann, approaching the sources empathetically and—as far as is possible—impartially, defines the relevant texts with an eye to Paul's earliest interpreters. Most creative of Lüdemann's analysis of the early Pauline interpreters is his theory that 2 Thessalonians is a counter-forgery written to replace the flawed eschatology of 1 Thessalonians. Lüdemann offers a good summary of his *Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles* with a revised Pauline chronology. He is more critical of Acts than traditional chronologies have been, continuing to follow in the footsteps of his exegetical progenitor, John Knox (see his *Chapters in a Life of Paul*). Lüdemann engages in extensive redaction of Acts and asserts Paul's *Hauptbriefe* as the primary sources for such a study. The effect on his exegesis is dramatic, but it has a minimal effect on Paul's *curriculum vitae*.

Philemon economically contains the essentials of Paul's theology and personality, so, bridging from methodology to exegesis, Lüdemann offers a commentary of Philemon, threshing out the key suppositions for his study. Chapter four and five then evaluate Paul's Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts. Lüdemann concludes, "Greece and Rome were garments in which the apostle wrapped himself against a cold world, but the God of Israel was the source of his inner fire (136)." In chapter six Lüdemann develops the tradition Paul received from early Hellenistic Jewish-Christians, arguing that Paul saw the church as the new Israel. Lüdemann then explores 1 Thess 2:14-16 and Rom 9-11, where Paul is pictured as trying to hold together a church that is both Christian and Jewish. It is, however, an impossible social scenario.

Given Lüdemann's record, critical readers will find themselves waiting for the other shoe to drop. While this book is more mainstream than his latest works, there is a turnaround in chapter seven. Lüdemann departs from his purely historical approach to study Paul's visionary accounts as religious and psychological phenomena. Lüdemann paints Paul as a conflicted fanatic projecting his struggle upon Christians, who subsequently experiences a catastrophic breakthrough where he escapes into a world of hallucination. Paul emerges from this mental break as the Christ-appointed Gentile apostle.

Lüdemann follows with an analysis of Paul's misunderstanding of Christ: Paul's Christology contradicts Jesus' view of the fundamental role of religion in life. Paul is, therefore, the energetic genius behind the departure of Christianity from Judaism. Paul hijacked the Hellenistic church that was doomed to dissolve, and then made the Jewish-Christian church obsolete, leaving in place well-trained leaders to carry on his self-deception. Lüdemann concludes with an intriguing and unsatisfactory essay on the question of the relevance of Paul for today—so unsatisfactory in fact that he must qualify his statements in a cautious epilogue.

Though not always making great choices, Lüdemann offers his exegesis in a clear and straightforward manner that is accessible to most audiences. The reader, however, must grant a number of undemonstrated exegetical and historical statements in order to follow Lüdemann's argument through to the end. His analysis of Jesus sayings in Paul, for example, is entirely dismissive and based upon a system of historical redaction and assessment that is contained only within Professor Lüdemann's head. Furthermore, Lüdemann lacks an appreciation for the cultural distance of the New Testament, and fails to appreciate sociological and psychological differences, resulting in judgments of historicity that are questionable. Finally, Lüdemann fails to demonstrate the relationship of the Gospels and Paul. Is Jesus merely a mythological derivative of Paul's theology? If so, how can any "real Jesus" foil be extracted from the Gospels to contrast to Paul's Christology?

While there is some good work here, the final result is a book that lacks the academic integrity that an individual like Gerd Lüdemann, with all of his theological intellect, scholastic prowess, and desire for historical honesty, should be able to provide.

Brenton Dickieson, Regent College, Vancouver, BC.

Scot McKnight and Matthew C. Williams. *The Synoptic Gospels: An Annotated Bibliography*. Institute for Biblical Research Bibliographies 6. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000. 126 pp., paper, \$14.99.

In a series dedicated to facilitating scholars with bibliographic material, Scot McKnight and Matthew C. Williams make a valuable addition, this time in Synoptic Gospels research. For those unfamiliar with the series, these bibliographies are produced under the auspices of the Institute for Biblical Research. Each bibliography is intent on making accessible the most recent English-language works in order to "compliment and expedite thorough, informed research." Every bibliographic entry is annotated, that is,



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briefly discussed (one to three sentences in length) in order to inform the reader about their contents and general usefulness.

This sixth volume, dealing specifically with Synoptic Gospels research, is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter discusses bibliographies, surveys, and general introductions to the basic issues in Synoptic studies. The second chapter discusses textual issues, specifically textual criticism, style and language, contextual studies, and the use of the Old Testament in the Synoptic Gospels. The third chapter discusses methodological issues, specifically general studies, source criticism, Q studies, form criticism, redaction criticism, aesthetic criticism, social-scientific criticism, and genre criticism. Chapters four through six deal with each of the Synoptic Gospels in turn by their canonical order. The topics include introductory issues, commentaries, and special studies (which varies depending on the Gospel). Finally, the seventh chapter discusses theology. This final chapter comments on those studies that summarize the theology of the Synoptic Gospels in a synthetic manner.

*The Synoptic Gospels: An Annotated Bibliography* is an excellent resource for students and pastors. As the preface to the series states, this volume will "help guide students to works relevant to their research interests. They cut down the time needed to locate material, thus providing the researcher with more time to read, assimilate, and write" (7). Whether one uses the bibliography at the beginning of research, or to check that no major English-language work has been missed, the volume is valuable. Many other works could have been added to the bibliography, but that is beyond the purpose of the series. The goal of the series is not comprehensiveness, but up-to-date bibliographic access. According to the preface, the Institute for Biblical Research and Baker Book House is to publish updates of each volume about every five years (8). Such an accomplishment will provide students with the most relevant information of research in the field of biblical studies in an easily accessible and summarized fashion. This volume, as well as its counterparts, would be a valuable addition to the libraries of both individuals and academic institutions.

Edward W. Klink, III, University of St. Andrews

R. Timothy McLay, *The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003. xiv + 207 pages. \$30.00.

"The purpose of this volume [is] to explore and explain the use of the LXX in NT research" (171). It begins with an Introduction (1-16) that includes concise discussions of terminology used in Septuagintal studies (LXX, OG, MT, HB, Scripture and Canon), followed by helpful overviews of "Issues in LXX Research" and "The Use of Scripture in the New Testament." The first chapter ("The Use of Scripture in the New Testament," 17-36), explores the deliberate use of the OG (Amos 9:11-12) in the NT (Acts 15:16-18), following an inductive approach that begins with citations texts, rather than the typical outline of the history of its textual transmissions.

Chapter 2 ("Identifying a Source as Greek or Hebrew," 37-76) examines several passages in which the reading of the NT agrees with the OG, but is not



necessarily dependent on it. Here McLay raises the issue of distinguishing the use of the Greek from the Hebrew form used in the NT since the NT and LXX texts share a close relationship in their transmission. Through linguistic relationships, he explores translation technique (TT) and provides a model for the study of TT in the next chapter (Chapter 3, "A Model for TT," 77-99).

In Chapter 4 ("The Origins of the Septuagint and Its History," 100-136), McLay shows that the production of additional versions and recensions of the LXX inject a further complication of textual fluidity into understanding the use of Scripture in the NT. Our knowledge of the multiplicity of text forms and the ways that the NT writers actually cited Scriptures, he contends, helps us to understand why some citations appear to have a mixed character and why we are unable to be certain about the source of others (Heb 1:6). In a context of textual pluriformity, the author concludes, it was the Jewish Scriptures as they were known, read, and interpreted in the Greek language that provide the basis for much, if not most, of the interpretive context of the NT writers.

In the final chapter, ("The Impact of the LXX on the NT," 137-70), the author demonstrates the significance of the findings of his study by giving a sustained argument for the influence of the Greek Jewish Scriptures on the NT. Exploiting the LXX as a means for interpreting NT texts, McLay argues that the vocabulary, citations of Scripture, and theology reflected in the NT writings demonstrate the "universal impact" of the LXX on NT theology. The volume concludes (Chapter 6), with "Summary, Conclusions, and Prospects," ( 171-73) and contains a "Glossary of Terms," (174-77), "Bibliography," (178-99), "Index of Authors," ( 200-2), and an "Index of Scripture and Ancient Writings," (203-7).

Problematic throughout his book is McLay's assumption that the MT is the *Vorlage* to the LXX (esp. p. 46, 49), though he is elsewhere critical of that assumption (109). Also, his discussion of the numerous motivations for intentional changes made by LXX translators (93) would have been greatly enhanced by some mention of stylistic variation. Though he argues that NT authors can translate Hebrew texts the same as the LXX translators have, he seems not to allow for this when discussing 1 Cor 15:54 (106). More interaction with the works of Jellicoe (*Septuagint and Modern Study*) and Jobes and Silva (*Invitation to the Septuagint*) would have helped orient readers more thoroughly in modern discussion. It is a shame M. L. Wade's *Consistency of Translation Techniques in the Tabernacle Accounts of Exodus in the Old Greek* (SBLSCSS 49; Leiden: Brill, 2003) was not available to McLay when writing his volume, as it contains insightful and more comprehensive discussions of TT.

Despite these reservations, McLay has made an important contribution to the field. In particular, he has drawn attention to the role of TT (62) in discerning the use of the LXX in the NT in addition to providing helpful guidelines (133-34) for students and scholars alike to carefully examine citations. That he thought to include a glossary of terms is likewise an asset, though it may have been enhanced by indicating words in the text that appear in the glossary. His exegesis is provocative, yet balanced and cogently argued (esp 165-67). This book is an essential resource for anyone working in the Old in the New.

Daniel M. Gurtner, St. Mary's College, University of St. Andrews, Scotland

## Book Reviews

Henri Nouwen, *Jesus: A Gospel*. Ed. by Michael O'Laughlin. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001. 150 pp., cloth, \$19.95.

The late Henri Nouwen referred often in his writings to Jesus, but he never wrote a book on the life of Christ. Since Nouwen's untimely death in 1996, his friend Michael O'Laughlin has combed through the writer's published works to assemble the present volume. Here, in extended quotations from about thirty sources, is the best of what Henri Nouwen had to say about Jesus.

After appropriate introductory material, O'Laughlin opens the book with selections on "God's Way." By that he means "Spiritual Living", "God's Hidden Way" (the way of hiddenness and weakness) "Descending with Jesus" (always important to Nouwen), and "God and the World."

Then follow five sections which are the heart of *Jesus: A Gospel*: (1) "The Gospel Begins" (from the annunciation to the start of Jesus' ministry); (2) "Reaching Out" (Jesus' public career opens and reaches its height); (3) "Entering the Heart of the Gospel" (from Peter's confession through the Last Supper); (4) "For This I Have Come" (the passion account from Gethesemane through Golgotha); and (5) "Death and Darkness Are Overcome" (Jesus' resurrection, appearances, and promise to return).

Each selection within these sections includes a scripture passage from the Jerusalem Bible (Nouwen's favorite translation) and at least one sidebar from either his writings or scripture. A concluding section bearing the book's title offers an extended passage on Jesus' life and our lives taken from *Making All Things New* (1981).

The writing is what we have come to expect from the Dutch priest-psychologist-professor-chaplain-author. It is graceful, insightful, compassionate, and wise. The editor and publishers have included numerous sketches from Jesus' life by Nouwen's beloved fellow Netherlander, Rembrandt van Rijn. The resulting volume is therefore a delight to both eye and hand. Nearly 8 by 10 inches, it is printed on heavy paper with generous, easy-to-read type and extra-wide margins.

Here is an ideal companion for periods of meditative reading -- and rereading. For those who love Nouwen's writing, no further announcement is needed. For those who have not read him, this is a fine place to start.

Jerry R. Flora

Stanley E. Porter and Jeffrey T. Reed, *Discourse Analysis and the New Testament: Approaches and Results*. JSNTSS 170; Studies in New Testament Greek 4. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999. 425 pp, cloth. \$85.00.

This collection of essays explores the theory and practice of discourse analysis, demonstrating its range of applicability and fruitfulness across the New Testament canon in regard to questions of structure, linguistics, narrative criticism, and meaning. Written

by established scholars in the field of discourse analysis, it is an excellent introduction to this emerging exegetical discipline.

Contributions include: S. E. Porter and J. T. Reed, "Discourse Analysis and the New Testament: An Introduction"; Eugene Nida, "The Role of Context in the Understanding of Discourse"; J. T. Reed, "The Cohesiveness of Discourse: Towards a Model of Linguistic Criteria for Analyzing New Testament Discourse"; S. E. Porter, "Is Critical Discourse Analysis Critical? An Evaluation Using Philemon as a Test Case"; M. B. O'Donnell, "The Use of Annotated Corpora for New Testament Discourse Analysis: A Survey of Current Practice and Future Prospects"; S. L. Black, "The Historic Present in Matthew: Beyond Speech Margins"; R. E. Longacre, "A Top-Down, Template-Driven Narrative Analysis, Illustrated by Application to Mark's Gospel"; *ibid.*, "Mark 5.1-43: Generating the Complexity of a Narrative from its Most Basic Elements"; W. Schenk, "The Testamental Disciple-Instruction of the Markan Jesus (Mark 13): Its Levels of Communication and its Rhetorical Structures"; J. M. Watt, "Pronouns of Shame and Disgrace in Luke 22.63-64"; G. Martín-Asensio, "Participant Reference and Foregrounded Syntax in the Stephen Episode"; T. Klutz, "Naked and Wounded: Foregrounding, Relevance and Situation in Acts 19.13-20"; R. J. Erickson, "The Damned and the Justified in Romans 5.12-21: An Analysis of Semantic Structure"; J. P. Louw, "A Discourse Reading of Ephesians 1.3-14"; S. H. Levinsohn, "Some Constraints on Discourse Development in the Pastoral Epistles"; E. R. Wendland, "'Let No One Disregard You!' (Titus 2.15): Church Discipline and the Construction of Discourse in a Personal, 'Pastoral' Epistle"; A. H. Snyman, "Hebrews 6.4-6: From a Semiotic Discourse Perspective"; B. Olsson, "First John: Discourse Analyses and Interpretations"; J. Callow, "Where Does 1 John 1 End?"

David A. deSilva

Jonathan L. Reed, *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus: A Re-examination of the Evidence*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000. 253pp., paper, \$17.00.

The sub title, *A Reexamination of the Evidence*, brings an empirical, archaeological approach to biblical studies. Its task seeks to engage historical and literary studies with archeological findings essentially in Galilee. Galilee is the selected focus appropriately as the author is Field Director of the Sepphoris Aeropolis excavations. He is able to draw on years of field experience. Thus archeological evidence is placed "front and center by synthesizing the available material, and then interpreting the material culture of first century Galilee in such a way as to suggest some implications for Jesus and the Gospels."

The author is calling New Testament scholars to pay more attention to the archeological data. In his view, too often the process has been to consult the text, view the historical material and then look for collaborating evidence from archeology. Also, he points out that a disproportionate amount of attention has been given to the archeology of Jerusalem to the neglect of Galilee. In addition most of the sites in Galilee written about are churches or monasteries from the Byzantine Period. The exceptions for first



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century archeological discoveries are Nazareth and Capernaum. Other cities from this area that yield insight into the culture of the first century are Yodefat, Gamla, Sepphoris and Tiberias. However, the problem remains that the book and the spade yield different kinds of evidence that are not always easily integrated. Thus the solution is what the author terms the crossword puzzle approach. The horizontal rows are filled in from the texts while the vertical rows are filled in by clues from archeology. Therefore, the chief role of archeology is to reconstruct the social world of Jesus.

Archeology examines settlement patterns, site size, trade routes, topography, architecture, materials used in construction, domestic and public buildings, utensils, socio-economic status and religious structures. The author proceeds by examining two sites in depth, Sepphoris and Capernaum and includes some comparisons from Tiberias and Nazareth. This is done demographically, ethnically, religiously and by considering the socio-economic factors following urbanization introduced by Herod Antipas. The concluding part of the work attempts to locate the Sayings Gospel Q archeologically in Galilee.

The author, early on, discusses the origin of the Galilean population in the first century. After dismissing several theories, the author carefully and competently builds his case. He believes repopulation began slowly with resettlement by Judeans during the Hamonean dynasty. Evidence from the artifacts points to a remarkable similarity in domestic space shared by Judeans and Galileans. Specifically this is indicated by chalk vessels, stepped plastered pools (*mikvah*), secondary burial in ossuaries and bone profiles lacking pork.

The author proceeds to determine the population of the Herodian cities in Galilee by determining their area and then multiplying by population density in known and similar villages. Thereby he determines the population of Sepphoris to be somewhere between 8,000 to 12,000. Tiberias being a more difficult site to analyze since it is still inhabited is estimated to be 6,000 to 12,000 in population in the first century. Using the same procedure, Nazareth at this time is estimated to have a maximum population of 400 and Capernaum a maximum population of 1,700. The larger Palestinian cities of Caesarea-Maritima and Scythopolis are estimated to be 20,000 to 40,000.

Sepphoris does not yield artifacts directly connecting to Jesus. In fact, most of the Jewish artifacts: stone dishes and *mikvahs* appear to be from the latter part of the first century C.E. Artifacts from Scythopolis and Caesarea-Maritima are much more elaborate with more Greek and multi-religious orientation. Nazareth, from the evidence, appears to be a very small town of less than 400, no paved streets, not planned in an orthogonal manner, no public structures, no marble, no mosaics, no frescoes, no pork bones, no public inscriptions and no coinage. Thus the statement, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" seems apt.

Next to Jerusalem, the most mentioned village in the New Testament is Capernaum. Only a few sherds have been found from the Hellenistic Period suggesting a modest encampment. In the late Hellenistic Period, Capernaum emerges as a village. In the first century C.E., Capernaum experienced increased local travel serving as a junction between east and west and north and south. The author negates the idea of the Via Maris



going through Capernaum at this time. With the building projects of Tiberias (30 C.E), Capernaum emerged as an interregional junction with increased prominence. With 600-1,500 inhabitants it would have been one of the larger villages in Galilee but certainly not a *polis*. Streets were narrow (3-6 feet), winding, of pounded dirt and with no evidence of any public buildings beyond the synagogue. Also there were neither mosaics nor inscriptions. Jesus moved from a tiny nearly isolated village of Nazareth to Capernaum a slightly larger village with a regional network. Galilee in the first century is characterized as provincial and with a limited regional economy.

From consideration of spatial imagery, the author places the setting for Q in Galilee, possibly Capernaum, stating Q is a collection as opposed to a narrative. Thus the author sees a significant continuity between Jesus and the early Jesus traditions.

An excellent chapter eight summarizes the approach and findings of the author. The value of archeology in the study of Jesus is reiterated. The author's thesis is that Gospel textual studies should not dictate the questions posed by archeology. From the archeological record, he believes: (1) Galilee was a definable region, (2) that it was Jewish, (3) that Galilee underwent change with the urbanization project of Herod Antipas, (4) and that Jesus' message responded by reinterpreting the Jewish heritage. The work concludes with an expansive 26 page bibliography and a helpful seven page index. The work is extremely helpful in focusing Jesus studies in Galilee and confining them to the early first century C.E.

Richard E. Allison

Robert H. Stein, *Studying the Synoptic Gospels: Origin and Interpretation*. Second edition; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001. 302 pp., paper, \$27.99.

This updated and expanded version of the 1987 edition remains the best introduction to the modern state of the question regarding the Synoptic Problem and its solution. Stein begins with an exploration of the commonly observed similarities and differences between the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) that have made literary interdependence the preferred explanation, and then lays out the cases for Markan priority and the existence of the sayings collection Q, although he remains sensibly flexible regarding the exact nature of this hypothetical text (whether oral or written, whether a single collection or multiple collections). He then addresses most sensibly the problem of Matthew-Luke agreements against Mark, which have been put forward as the major objection to Markan priority, and concludes with a review of the value of source criticism (the discipline that largely drives this conversation) and its relationship to the larger program of historical-critical interpretation.

In a second part, Stein presents the discipline of form criticism and the operating philosophy that has tended to guide its application. This opens up a fine discussion of the history of the Jesus tradition from oral to written form, and a conclusion about what we can learn from form criticism. A third part presents a clear and amply illustrated introduction to the theory and practice of redaction criticism, which remains an

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essential critical skill for analyzing the voice, theological convictions, and pastoral concerns of each evangelist.

This book is highly recommended for all students of the Gospels, but especially for those entrusted with the exposition and proclamation of the Word.

David A. deSilva

H. Benedict Green, CR; *Matthew, Poet of the Beatitudes*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 203. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001. 350 pp., cloth \$105.00.

In this volume, Green, author of a 1975 commentary on the first gospel (London: OUP), argues that the Beatitudes in Matthew's version are a carefully constructed poem, exhibiting a number of the characteristics of OT Hebrew poetry yet a unique composition by the evangelist in Greek. The book is divided into three sections. The first, "The Beatitudes as Poetry," is comprised of five chapters including "Priorities in the Study of a Text" (Chapter 1, pp. 16-36), in which the author argues for the priority of literary analysis over source analysis. The second chapter ("The Beatitudes: Evidences of Poetic Structure," pp. 37-47) contains Green's attempt to show the (Hebrew) poetic structure of the Beatitudes. The author further contends (Chapter 3, "Matthew as Versifier [1]: The Remodeling of Old Testament Quotations," pp. 48-73) that Matthew has remodeled other OT poetic texts elsewhere in his gospel. Chapter 4 ("Matthew as Versifier [2]: New Compositions Influenced by the Old Testament," pp. 74-161) examines the composition of several poetic texts which, the author argues, were composed under the influence of the OT. All of these are unique Matthean contributions (Chapter 5, "Conclusion: One Writer," pp. 162-74).

In the second section "Poetry and the Meaning of the Beatitudes," the author has three chapters: Chapter 6 (pp. 176-80) contains Green's discussion of the "Structure and Meaning" of the Beatitudes, while in Chapter 7 (pp. 181-251), he analyzes them according to "Matched Pairs." Chapter 8 ("The Shape of the Whole Poem," pp. 252-61) contains the author's account of the poetic structure of the Beatitudes and its relation to the whole of the sermon.

Green's third section is his "Conclusion." In Chapter 9 ("Sources or Influences?" pp. 264-83), he insists that the wording of the Beatitudes resonates with LXX (esp. Psalms) language (p. 264). Chapter 10 ("The Poem in its Setting," pp. 284-292) demonstrates that the Beatitudes serve as a prologue to the entire sermon the way the Decalogue does to the Law of Moses. The volume contains three appendices: "Appendix A: The Lord's Prayer in Luke (Luke 11.2-4)" (pp. 293-99), "Appendix B: The Making of Matthew 11" (pp. 300-305), and "Appendix C: Psalm 119 and the Beatitudes" (pp. 306-8). There is a Bibliography (pp. 309-28), Index of References (pp. 329-44), and Index of Authors (pp. 345-50).

There are many points in this volume with which one could interact. Green's contention that the Beatitudes are influenced particularly by the LXX of Ps 119 is particularly intriguing and worthy of further exploration. Yet while Green is to be

commended for his mastery of the text of the Matthean Beatitudes, his work is not without its serious limitations. First, most synoptic scholars will find his commitment to the Farrer-Goulder hypothesis both unconvincing and unnecessary. Second, Green betrays a great weakness in his understanding of Hebrew poetry, which was based more on meter than rhyming schemes (pp. 57, 66, cf. 75). Third, Green completely fails to address the form and structures of established Greek poetry anywhere outside of Matthew and addresses no modern scholarly discussion on poetics in the NT at all. Indeed, he gives more attention to Chinese poetry (p. 176) than to Greek! Fourth, Green's writing style is inordinately cumbersome. Wrought with run-on sentences (e.g., p. 60), lengthy parenthetical statements (p. 68), and awkward sentence structure, Green's book is very difficult to read. Fifth, the author has a habit of employing a "hermeneutic of assertion." That is, he frequently simply states a key point to be the case without demonstrating it to any degree (pp. 39, 61, 64, 67, etc. Cf. 130). Sixth, his argument for dependence on OT texts is methodologically naïve and contrived. He frequently cites literary dependence of a Matthean "poetical" text upon an LXX text based on the presence of a single word (pp. 51, 75, 92, 103, 116, 120, 147, 148, 229, etc.), sometimes a mere preposition (p. 59). Finally, the author's familiarity with OT in Matthew issues is severely dated, citing R. Gundry's 1967 work as the "recent" approach to the subject (p. 48). One looking for a unique discussion will find much of that here. Yet one looking for convincing argumentation, updated discussions, and methodological soundness need look elsewhere. Particularly helpful places to start are Davies and Allison's ICC commentary volumes. Betz's *Hermeneia* commentary on the *Sermon on the Mount* is both recent (1995) and comprehensive. W. D. Davies, R. Guelich, and J. Jeremias have each contributed seminal works on the topic under the same title, and Davies has also done a work on *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*.

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Rodney A. Whitacre, *John*. IVPNTC 4. Downer Groves: InterVarsity Press, 1999, 526 pp., cloth, \$22.00.

Kenneth O. Gangel, *John*. HNTC 4. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2000, xi +402 pp., cloth, \$19.99.

The IVP and Holman New Testament Commentary Series both share the same objective—to help Bible teachers in the church understand the text and then move to its culturally relevant application. As a general rule, Whitacre does an excellent job of helping the reader understand the meaning of John in its original setting, but doesn't labor as much as Gangel to provide a culturally relevant application. (That is not to say, however, that insightful application is nowhere to be found.) Gangel, on the other hand, spends most of his energy in making the message of John culturally relevant; however, his exposition lacks the thorough examination of Whitacre, and does little more than affirm the traditional conservative evangelical reading of the Gospel according to John.



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Gangel's emphasis on contemporary relevance is intentional. The Holman New Testament Commentary Series is designed in such a way as to make the point of the passage clear and stated in a relevant way by using call out graphics such as "In a nutshell", "main idea", and "supporting idea". The exposition is divided up by chapters whereby the commentary corresponds to a chapter in the Gospel as it appears in the New International Version. This at times, unfortunately, leads to the breaking up of a pattern of thought. For example, while most commentators of John recognize 2.23-3.21 as a single unit, Gangel is forced to divide it into two units, and come up with two distinct main ideas.

Each chapter of Gangel's commentary starts with a quote from some well-known Christian that relates to the perceived message of the chapter. The quote is followed by a story or anecdote that helps the reader anticipate the main themes, and at times serves as an illustration to the main idea of the chapter. A summary of the chapter is followed by brief verse-by-verse commentary, usually just enough to support the main point. The chapter ends with some principles that can be gleaned from the passage at hand, some suggestions for application, a prayer, a small section called "deeper discoveries", and a teaching outline.

The overall design of the commentary series leads to the two major weakness of the commentary on John—its inability to lead the reader in an adequate examination of the text in its historical, political, theological and sociological context. This is in part due to the fact that little space is given for such an endeavor. In fact, in the introduction we learn that literary and exegetical detail will be sacrificed for the sake of "practical exposition" (1). The problem with this approach is that it encourages the already prevalent tendency within the church to move to contemporary significance before understanding the meaning of a given text in its original context. Thus, the assumption is that *practical* exposition can be done without doing the work necessary to understand the original intent.

As a result, in an attempt to fit with the design of the commentary, Gangel seems to impose a culturally relevant meaning on the text at times. For example, the account of Jesus turning the water into wine at Cana is supposed to demonstrate that "weddings create opportunities for families to glorify God and witness their faith"; or as the *In a Nutshell* reads, "In celebration or convocation, Jesus must be the focus of our lives". While that may be true about weddings or convocations, it is doubtful that John included this story to teach that axiom. Whitacre is probably more on target, writing that Jesus was revealing his identity as the one who would bring about the promised time of restoration.

The IVP series has given Whitacre more freedom to explore the text, and explore it he does. The result is a masterful exposition, one which reads well, and demonstrates the art of condensing extensive research into concise sentences and paragraphs. Perhaps one of the greatest benefits of this commentary is Whitacre's ability to bring the reader along in the examination of the text, making connections with other parts of the Gospel, and teaching the reader, in effect, how to study the Gospel while providing helpful, but not obtrusive, details along the way.



Whitacre's exposition of the prologue of John (1.1-18) is exemplary of the kind of work one finds throughout the commentary. As he brings his readers along in the exposition of this dense text, he points out the major themes that will later be developed in the story (Jesus as revelation from God, Jesus as life-giver, the conflict between belief and unbelief, etc.), while also adding fresh insight. For example, he sees 1.17, not as a contrast between law and grace, but rather a contrast found in the degree of revelation. Law was "given" through Moses, which is an example of divine grace; but this grace is intensified when Jesus "came" in the incarnation. This understanding seems to better fit the context of the prologue of John and what we know about first century Judaism's view of the law.

In the end, the value of each commentary will depend on the primary objective of the reader. Gangel's work is a helpful resource if one is looking for illustrations and ways to fine tune one's teaching and preaching. But if the reader is looking for a well-written, concise resource to help see how main themes are developed in John, and to better understand the original intent of John's gospel, Whitacre's work will not disappoint.

Kelly David Liebengood, Seminario ESEPA, San José, Costa Rica

J. Edwards (ed.), *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. New Testament IX: Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999. 346 pp., cloth, \$40.00.

Gorday (ed.), *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. New Testament IX: Romans, 1-2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000. 346 pp., cloth, \$40.00.

Donald Bray (ed.), *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. New Testament XI: 1 Peter, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John, Jude*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000. 288 pp., cloth, \$40.00.

Thomas C. Oden serves as the general editor for a truly new and needed series of commentaries on the Bible, bringing together relevant samplings of comments and interpretations on Scripture made by early church leaders of the first through the eighth centuries CE. Ecumenical in scope, this series anticipates covering the Old Testament in seven volumes, the Apocrypha in two, and the New Testament in twelve. In an age in which scholars stress the importance of "hearing" the Scriptures not only from within one's own social location (e.g., interpretation within the Western tradition of more or less male readers), but from other social and ideological locations as well (e.g., Asian Christianity, Latin-American Christianity, feminist interpretation, and other post-colonial interpretations), this series provides an often-overlooked dimension, enabling a far more holistic approach to interpretation insofar as it makes the readings of interpreters from different times and from the varying cultures of the circum-Mediterranean available and accessible.

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The volumes are organized much like standard commentaries, with the Scripture text broken down into manageable sections (pericopes), followed by the editor's overview of the kinds of questions that guided patristic interpretation. Short selections from the works of such fathers as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Epiphanius, Tertullian, Cyprian, Victorinus, Ambrose, John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nyssa, Jerome, Augustine, and many others follow, each with a brief subheading that provides the focal point of the selection. Using this resource alongside modern critical commentaries helps balance the important, yet often atomistic, insights from exegetical study of the Scriptures with the theological, ethical, and ecclesiastical reflection on the same texts that occupied the minds of those who forged the Great Church. This kind of resource is also a helpful balance to the reading of the texts from a particular, narrow, and often rather "recent" theological perspective, providing the truly ecumenical perspective of those who, in the main, reflected on Scripture before Orthodox and Roman Catholicism split, and long before Protestant movements separated from the Roman Catholic Church.

David A. deSilva

Donald A. Hagner, *Encountering the Book of Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2002. 213 pp., paper, \$21.99.

This is an amazingly engaging commentary on one of the most important books in the New Testament. It is an attractive chapter-by-chapter commentary written in a user-friendly, lucid style. There are over sixty side bars filled with informative information such as: an outline of Hebrews, Midrashic interpretation, Psalm 110 in Hebrew, Sabbath Rest, and Mechizedek.

The Encounter series by Baker targets college-level Bible course as textbooks. However, this work deserves the serious study of any earnest Christian. The work surveys the entire book of Hebrews, moving between its theological message and practical application. The goals of the work are as follows: "(1) present the factual content, (2) introduce historical, geographical and cultural background, (3) outline hermeneutical principles, (4) to work on critical issues, (5) to substantiate the Christian faith."

The author makes the case for a high Christology in Hebrews emphasizing Christ as high priest, the eternal nature of Christ's priesthood, Christ's atoning work, Christ's enthronement, the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice and Christ the author and pioneer of salvation. This is accomplished by demonstrating that the new is already present in the old.

The author considers the work first an exhortation or sermon, then a treatise and finally an epistle exhibiting terminal characteristics of such. The major purpose of Hebrews is "to exhort as the frequently inserted exhortations indicate." Thus careful consideration is given to the circumstances of the original readers. Apparently they are in danger of lapsing back into Judaism or Gentile paganism or perhaps a retreat into proto-Gnosticism. To counter, this according to Dr. Hagner, Hebrews sets for the "incomparable superiority of Christ and the finality of God's work in Jesus." In other

words the answer is preaching and theology. The author of Hebrews accomplishes this by alternating between discourse and application.

The author includes eighteen pages of introduction addressing origin, author, readers, date, purpose, structure, literary genre, archetypes, use of Old Testament, relation of old and new and the problem of anti-semitism in Hebrews. The end materials include: ten pages of Conclusion, setting forth theological emphases, contribution to New Testament theology, what Hebrews offers the church and the individual Christian, an Excursus dealing with entrance into the canon; a Selected Bibliography; a Glossary; a Scripture Index and a Subject Index.

The book of Hebrews and this commentary serve as a corrective to triumphalism, the get rich quick gospel and easy eschatology exhorting the Christian to persevere in the faith once and for all delivered to the saints. Faith and faithfulness receive greater treatment than in any other book in the New Testament.

The author, Donald Hagner, is the George Eldon Ladd Professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary. He wrote the two-volume Matthew commentary in the Word Biblical Commentary series. The present book is a complement to his Hebrews in the New International Biblical Commentary series.

Richard Allison

John Hall Elliott, *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 37B. New York: Doubleday, 2001. 980 pp., hardback, \$60.00.

John H. Elliott is Professor of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of San Francisco, and has spent a lifetime researching and writing on 1 Peter. His 980-page second edition of 1 Peter in the Anchor Bible series replaces Reicke's 71-page inaugural commentary of 1964. Given the size of Elliott's work, this review will only be able to highlight some of its important features and contributions.

Elliott's social-scientific approach to Scripture leads him to focus much attention on the social make-up of the recipients of 1 Peter. He maintains that Christianity in the five western Roman provinces of Asia Minor (1:1) was for the most part a rural phenomenon, making its headway mostly in villages and household communities. It is for this reason, Elliott adds, that no cities are mentioned in the address (1.1), and it is also why we find no mention of *ekklesia*, a term basic to Paul's urban mission.

That the addressees come from a predominantly rural background is significant for Elliott, for this means that the very nature of their suffering is not like that of the Christians in the Hellenized cities found in Paul's writings. Elliott sets forth that the "various trials" come as a result of the Christians' social condition as outsiders, instead of Neronian (or later Roman) persecution. This conclusion is not unique, and in fact is the position taken by several recent commentaries on 1 Peter (see Goppelt and Michaels for example). What is unique, however, is his claim that the addressees in 1 Peter were literal *paroikoi* and *parepidemoi* ('sojourners and strangers'; 1:1; 1:17; 2:11) in Asia Minor before becoming Christians. This social status caused them to be estranged from their host society, and led them to find acceptance elsewhere, ultimately within Christianity.



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The two terms are only used as metaphors later in Christian vernacular because the experience of the literal *paroikoi* and *perepidemoi* became paradigmatic for all Christians in a secular society.

While this explanation is indeed original, it is not without problems. Elliott repeatedly insists that the social marginalization in 1 Peter occurred *before* conversion and not as a result of conversion, but he offers no convincing argumentation for why we should read it thus (101-103; 312-316; 457-462; detailed comment 476-483). While Elliott may have rightly perceived the suffering and hostility of 1 Peter to be the result of discrimination, as is typical with functionalist sociological explanations, he does not allow religious ideology, in this case conversion to Christianity and its resultant new *anastrophe* ('way of life'), to be an independent social force capable of causing such discrimination. The sense one gets from reading 1 Peter, however, is that some are suffering as a result of converting to Christianity (see Michaels, 6-8; Goppelt, 38-45).

Some noteworthy features in the introduction are the following: an extensive Greek vocabulary analysis (41-68); a detailed analysis of compositional patterns, including inclusions and chiasms (68-80); and an insightful discussion of the aim, strategy and theological concepts of 1 Peter, reflections that come after some forty years of interacting with the text. One helpful observation in this section comes from Elliott's sociological approach of reading 1 Peter in light of commonly held ancient Mediterranean values. Elliott contends that the chief conflict of 1 Peter might be described as a conflict over honor and shame. While society is shaming Christians through slander and insult, 1 Peter reminds Christians of their honorary position in God's house through their shamed but divinely honored Lord Jesus Christ (1.3-2.10).

In an introduction that was otherwise thorough, it was disappointing to find only a one-page discussion on the eschatology of 1 Peter and its relation to ethics. For those who are curious with regard to Elliott's positions on genre, date and author, it should be said that Elliott rejects the idea that 1 Peter is a baptismal homily, an instead regards it as an encyclical hortatory letter. He would date 1 Peter sometime in the period between 73 and 92 CE. He would argue that a Petrine group in Rome (of which Silvanus and Mark were members) wrote the letter and ascribed it to Peter because they were responsibly expressing his teachings.

Those who come to this commentary for exegetical aid and insight will in no way be disappointed. It has everything one looks for in exegesis: word studies on key passages, text-critical analysis, thorough historical background research, well-argued syntactical classifications, especially for many prepositions and participles, and as is to be expected with this author, a perceptive historical analysis of key passages. Added to the exegesis are periodic detailed comments on such themes as the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers (2.9), tradition and redaction in 1 Peter 2:21-25, the hermeneutical problem of contextualizing gender constructs (3.1-7), and the doctrine of Jesus' descent into hell (3.18-22), which Elliott considers an erroneous concept.

As has been the case with other commentaries in the Anchor Bible series, Elliott's tome on 1 Peter has probably overshot its stated audience, "the general reader with no special formal training in biblical studies". Those who will find the insights of this commentary most useful are likely to be advanced seminary students with a good



grasp of Greek, and those who are doing research and teaching on 1 Peter at the postgraduate level. It should be noted that although the commentary was published in 2001, it appears that Elliott has only interacted with research up to 1996, and this does not include P.J. Achtemeier's commentary of 1 Peter in the Hermeneia series in that same year. Regardless, those doing any research and writing in 1 Peter will find it almost impossible to ignore this helpful contribution.

Kelly David Liebengood, San José, Costa Rica

Gregory E. Ganssle, ed., *God and Time: Four Views*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press 2001. 240 pp., paper, \$20.00.

The debate surrounding God's relationship to time is exceedingly complex, yet very important to theology. Many Christians do not see the problem in asserting both that God is timeless and also that God is affected by our prayers. Most theologians are unaware of the different views on the nature of time and consequently have not thought through the theological and practical implications of the views. One of the values of this "four views" book is that a number of such matters are discussed in a way that, for the most part, is accessible to non-specialists. At times the argumentation is dense, but overall the book is readable and the main issues are clearly presented. Until the publication of this book discussions of the topic were only available in technical works. The editor, contributors and InterVarsity Press are to be thanked for making this information available to the Christian public.

The introduction provides a clear and concise overview of the major questions involved as well as the four models proposed as answers. Ganssle groups the questions under five main headings: the nature of time, the creation of the universe, God's knowledge of the future, God's interaction with humans, and the fullness of God's life. Obviously, these are extremely important theological matters. The stance one takes regarding God and time leads to different views regarding the way God is thought to interact with us and what God could know about what we will do in the future.

Paul Helm defends divine timelessness: God does not experience sequential progression. This has been a fairly standard view throughout church history. Wolterstorff takes the opposite position arguing that God is temporal. He claims that, according to scripture, God has a history. Alan Padgett and William Lane Craig try to stake out intermediate positions between absolute timelessness and temporality. Padgett says that God has "relative timelessness" meaning that God is timeless relative to physical (created and measured) time but temporal relative to metaphysical (uncreated) time. God experiences duration yet in some sense "transcends" our time. Craig suggests that prior to creation God was timeless but since the creation of the universe God has been temporal.

Hence, it could be argued that the book only contains two views with three varieties of one view. Padgett, Craig and Wolterstorff all believe that in at least some respects God now experiences time. Helm is the only defender of divine timelessness, a position currently unpopular among Christian philosophers. Also, it should be noted that

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Helm's particular way of defending divine timelessness is not the most common way of doing so among philosophers who affirm the view (e. g. see the work of Brian Leftow).

That said, the book still serves an excellent purpose for it will make more Christians aware of the topic. Particularly of interest to pastors are the discussions regarding how various biblical texts should be interpreted depending on the view one takes regarding God and time. Helm and Wolterstorff engage in candid debate about whether or not texts that describe God as having changing emotions or responding to what humans do are to be understood anthropomorphically (Helm) or in a straightforward fashion (Wolterstorff). In this discussion the issues of which hermeneutical principles are to have preeminence, and the role philosophical theology is to have in the interpretation of scripture come to the forefront. These are extremely important matters. Most Arminians, for instance, have not understood the problems with claiming that God is timeless and also claiming that some of God's decisions are conditional upon what we do (e.g. election). I believe that once more people understand the incompatibility between the core doctrines of Arminianism and timelessness, they will give up timelessness

John Sanders, Huntington College, Huntington, IN.

Donald E. Gowan, ed. *The Westminster Theological Wordbook of the Bible*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003. 551pp., hardcover, \$34.95

The editor of this work is the Robert Cleveland Holland Professor of Old Testament, Emeritus, at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. He is assisted by thirty-one biblical scholars from a wide theological spectrum. Included are a number of international scholars.

The work is based on the vocabulary of the NRSV. An important step in interpretation is to study the vocabulary of the Bible. This one volume guide to the vocabulary of the Bible is written in plain English for a general audience. It traces word through the entire canon. Being a theological wordbook distinguishes this work from a Bible dictionary. Proper names are included only when there are significant entries used by the writers of scripture for a theological purpose. The first word is "Abaddon see Grave" followed by an article on "Abba" and concluding with "Zion see City."

The work is comprehensive. For instance, "A" has 33 articles, "B" has 20 articles and "S" has 44 articles. "Jesus" receives 21 pages of treatment, "God" gets 17, "Holy Spirit" 13, "Just" (including Justice, Justification, Justify, Righteous, Righteousness) get 10 pages. "Law" 9, "Family" 9, "Marriage" 8, "Gifts" "Presence" "Sacrifice" "Resurrection" "Prayer" each receive seven pages of treatment. "Peace" "People of God" "Covenant" "Believe" each get six pages. "Church" "Baptism" and "Create get five pages. There are no compound or multiple words found such as "Last Days" or "Born from Above." Omissions include convert, evangelist, only (as in only begotten), tradition and bishop. For "Elder" and Deacon" see "Ministry." For "Perish" see "Death" for "Hell" see "Grave."

Richard E. Allison

Larry W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003). Xxii + 746 pp. \$55.00

In the Twentieth Century there were three discipline-shaping christologies of the New Testament: Wilhelm Bousset's *Kyrios Christos* (1913), Oscar Cullmann's *The Christology of the New Testament* (1957), and James D.G. Dunn's *Christology in the Making* (1980). And now at the turn of the century we have Larry Hurtado's *Lord Jesus Christ*. Who is the fairest of them all? Hurtado. First, a brief summary.

Technically, *Lord Jesus Christ* (=LJC) is not a classical "christology" in the sense that it does not trot out all the titles of Christ in the NT, define them, and then synthesize the information into a meaningful whole. Instead, LJC is concerned with what Hurtado calls "Christ devotion," or the observable features of both the experience of Christ and the practices associated with worshipping him. This has been Hurtado's *modus operandi* for nearly three decades of research, and this approach to the questions of christology is not only helpful and illuminating, but historically more defensible than the classical method of synthesis and creedal articulation. Not that what LJC does is trace the all-too-common "do you really know what early Christians thought?" – no, Hurtado's "christology" is rudimentarily historic and traditional.

To work through the early Christian documents (and he covers canonical and non-canonical texts of the first two centuries) "from below," with the agenda of coming to terms with how early Christians expressed their devotion to Christ, is no small task. It is no small task, either, to summarize his massive details or well-written study. He begins with "Forces and Factors" at work in the shaping of early Christ devotion: Jewish monotheism, Jesus, religious experience, and the religious environment (27-78). Then we are treated to a scintillating study of early Pauline Christianity (79-153), Judean Jewish Christianity (155-216), Q and early devotion to Jesus (217-257), Jesus books (259-347), the crises and christology in Johannine Christianity (349-426), other early Jesus books. Here Hurtado puts to the test the strong and imaginative claims of scholarship contending for the acceptance of gnostic gospels and *The Gospel of Thomas* (427-485). Then he turns to the second century and the tributaries that flowed into that century (487-518). He has separate sections on what he calls "radical diversity," or Christ devotion that was not accepted by the vast majority of Christians – in which chapter he discusses Valentinianism and Marcion (519-561), and then he has a careful study of what he calls "proto-orthodox devotion." It's all here; and it's all good.

LJC is a *tour de force* of historical presentation and, as such, should become the standard textbook for all seminarians as they work their way through NT christologies. It will take patience, it will take time, but the time and patience will be rewarded with a deeper penetration into what early Christians believed and how they participated in the worship of Christ. One will be rewarded as well with a profound appreciation of the breadth and width of early Christian reflection on the centrality of Jesus Christ in the faith. There are too many points with which I agree to list them, but let me mention some highlights.



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First, the study is comprehensive: *LJC* presents the best and the latest of scholarship on everything germane to the topic of devotion to Jesus. Second, *LJC* frequently pulls off Chestertonian commonsensical observations – whether it concerns the conspicuous silence of any variations about Christ devotion in the earliest churches, the so-called Q community and its imagined lack of affirmation of the soteriological significance of the death of Jesus, the importance of Christ devotion in both Q and the Gospels (which he calls Jesus books), or the importance of the Old Testament for determining the pedigree and (proto-)orthodoxy of later Jesus books like *The Gospel of Thomas*. Hurtado has thought his way around and through the major discussions. He has something to offer at each juncture in *LJC*. Third, because *LJC* approaches the topic from the angle of devotion rather than simplistic Christological titles, there are in this book topics rarely found and which, by their inclusion, shed light on how Christians understood Christ. For instance, there is a careful dissection of the value of the *nomina sacra* (the reverential use of “names” for God) because names used are shown for what they are: dimensions of early Christian “praxis.” In addition, Hurtado has a nice section of early Christian exploration of the so-called “harrowing of hell.” These are but two illustrations of what happens when a traditional topic is examined from a new angle. There are others.

But most importantly, *LJC* is a historically-grounded, critically-aware and theologically-sensitive demonstration that Christ devotion goes back to the earliest days of the Church. There was very early a straightforward acceptance of the divinity of Jesus as one to be worshiped alongside the Father, within the framework of traditional Jewish monotheism. *LJC* is not a traditional defense of the deity of Christ, as can be seen in M.J. Harris, *Jesus as God*, but is instead an examination of how the earliest Christians expressed their devotion to Christ, and that devotion very early spills over into affirming what cannot be called anything other than Jesus’ divinity. Perhaps this is a christology from below; if so, it gets us as high as the early Christians got.

I have only minor quibbles about *LJC*, none of which is serious to the fundamental thesis of the book. There are too many “pit stops” to introduce topics, discussions, and debates. His discussion of the “Jesus books” at times gets too far from the discussion at hand – early Christ devotion. And, at times, I sense the important distinction between a “christology” and a study of “Christ devotion” gets blurred, perhaps unavoidably.

If I were to be stranded on an island and could take only two books, I probably wouldn’t take *LJC*, but I’d wish that I had it.

Scot McKnight, North Park University, Chicago

Roger E. Olson, *The Westminster Handbook to Evangelical Theology*. The Westminster Handbooks to Christian Theology. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004. 328 pp., paper, \$39.95.

Roger Olson has emerged in recent years as a significant voice in evangelical theology. A professor at Baylor University’s George W. Truett Theological Seminary,



Olson's published works have shown breadth of learning, depth of understanding, and even-handed balance. In addition to several short works he is the author of *Twentieth-Century Theology* (with Stanley Grenz, 1992), *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition and Reform* (1999), and *The Mosaic of Christian Belief: Twenty Centuries of Unity and Diversity* (2002). It is a compliment to him that Westminster John Knox Press invited him to produce their handbook on evangelical theology. It is also a compliment that the publishers asked him to create the work in its entirety rather than editing a volume of contributed essays. The result is a smoothly-written reference tool that is typical of Olson--informed, comprehensive, and irenic.

The handbook is divided into five sections of varying length: (1) the story of evangelical theology, (2) movements and organizations related to evangelical theology, (3) key figures in evangelical theology, (4) traditional doctrines in evangelical theology, and (5) issues in evangelical theology. Olson's personal leanings may be partially discerned in the work's dedication to Donald G. Bloesch of Dubuque Theological Seminary, "who has served as a model of irenic evangelical theology and generous orthodoxy."

Although the volume is printed in double columns, Part One (the story of evangelical theology) appears in single-column format, closely printed for about 65 pages. This important section sets the stage for all that follows and deserves careful reading in its entirety. Olson begins by rooting evangelical theology in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Pietism, revivalism, Puritanism, and Wesleyanism. He then describes "the crucible of modern evangelical theology in the Great Awakenings" followed by discussions of the old Princeton theology, holiness-pentecostalism, and fundamentalism. At that point he singles out five individuals as paradigms of evangelical thought: Carl F. H. Henry (dean of the movement), E. J. Carnell (apologist), Bernard Ramm (moderate), Donald Bloesch (progressive), and Clark Pinnock (postconservative). A discussion of tensions in contemporary evangelical theology concludes the book's opening section. Reading this material felt like a reprise of the reviewer's life, and the section can be commended to stand on its own as an excellent introduction.

Parts two through five of the handbook (approximately 260 pages) proceed in dictionary fashion, with entries of about three pages each arranged in alphabetical order. Seventeen articles discuss movements and organizations related to evangelical theology such as the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, dispensationalism, the Keswick movement, and the recent Third Wave. Might this be the place for an additional entry to describe *Christianity Today*, evangelicalism's flagship periodical?

Part Three describes sixteen key evangelical theologians, which includes repetition of the five who were discussed in Part One. Since most readers will likely use the handbook as a reference tool, consulting individual articles as needed, the repetition seems justified. No women or persons of color rate articles here for, as Olson himself notes, evangelical theology has been almost entirely a bastion of white male scholars. Hopefully the next generation will not be able to say that! Some might wish for an entry on the Quaker philosopher D. Elton Trueblood who came to describe himself as a liberal conservative. His intellectual, ecumenical leadership inspired many in the period 1945-75 to believe that evangelical Christianity could be a legitimate option in academia.

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Others might wish for an entry on the eclectic theology of D. L. Moody, who occupied a place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century similar to that of Billy Graham in the 20<sup>th</sup> (Graham is included).

More than sixty articles on traditional doctrines comprise the fourth and longest section of the book. Olson works at describing both the unity of evangelical theology and the places where diversity occurs. He also sets rigorous limits of length, all articles here being only about two pages long with accompanying references for further study. In keeping with current interests he stretches beyond some traditional boundaries to include entries on such topics as prayer, worship, and experience.

The handbook's closing section offers fourteen articles on current issues in evangelical theology. Here Olson's informed, irenic spirit shines as he calmly describes flashpoints in the movement. Almost all the entries are posed as either/or questions (e.g., Calvinism/Arminianism, inerrancy/infallibility, open theism/classical theism). In this section Olson revisits Part One's discussion of tensions in evangelical theology. He concludes by noting that the future of evangelical theology depends on "harmony, if not agreement," between two groups of influential thinkers: young innovators (Stanley Grenz, Nancey Murphy, John Sanders, Kevin Vanhoozer, Miroslav Volf) and guardians of the status quo (Millard Erickson, Norman Geisler, Wayne Grudem, Albert Mohler, Jr.) (p. 65f.).

All in all, this is a clearly written, thoroughly informed reference work on its subject. We can be grateful once again to Dr. Olson for his careful scholarly research and his expertise at making it available to his readers. The handbook should be an asset to the series in which it appears, hopefully enjoying a long, useful life.

Jerry R. Flora

John G. Stackhouse, Jr., editor, *What Does It Mean to be Saved? Broadening Evangelical Horizons of Salvation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002. 203 pp, paper, \$17.99.

This collection of essays resulted from a conference at Regent College in October 2001. The conference grew out of a concern among evangelical scholars at Regent and elsewhere that evangelicals had an impoverished understanding of salvation "that amounted to a sort of spiritual individualism that is little better than Gnosticism" (9). Participants from various countries, disciplines, and theological traditions met to share insights that they hoped would encourage evangelicals to develop a more comprehensive understanding of salvation. As Stackhouse observes, "Salvation is *not* about 'Christians going to heaven.' Salvation is about God redeeming the whole earth" (10). If evangelicals had a more adequate view of salvation, they might be inspired to join with God in his redemptive mission.

The book contains nine essays divided into three sections. The first section, "Basic Reconsiderations," addresses the biblical and historical contexts of salvation. Rikk E. Watts develops a biblical theology of salvation by tracing the theme of the Exodus/new creation as restoration of the image of God. He considers the implications of this theme for the understanding of our humanity. D. Bruce Hindmarsh examines the understanding of salvation among the early evangelicals, particularly John Wesley, and

discovers a more balanced treatment of personal and social concerns than can be found among modern evangelicals. Henri A. G. Blocher surveys the biblical and historical data on the atonement to argue that the theme of Christ's victory can be subsumed under the traditional evangelical emphases of Christ's obedience and penal substitution. He concludes that the doctrine of vicarious punishment is the "core treasure of the deposit of Scripture truth in the church" (91).

In the second section, "Expanding Particular Zones," essayists explore the social and cosmic dimensions of salvation. Vincent Bacote draws upon the perspective of the marginalized to develop a "concrete soteriology" (95). Such a soteriology would be public, political, pneumatological, and focused on a place of safety and justice for the oppressed. Cherith Fee Nordling explores salvation as the restoration of the image of God, "the relational, corporate union and communion of men and women together for and with one another and God" (117). She contends that the fulfillment of the image of God in humanity is found as women and men participate in relationship with God and one another, being formed by the cross and empowered by the Spirit. Amy L. Sherman looks forward to the consummation of salvation in terms of "life in the (new) city" (137). She believes that a concrete sense of our future home in the restored creation can encourage us to make a difference in the world today. Loren Wilkinson argues that Christians should be "converted pagans" (153), in the sense that they should recover an appreciation for their transformed creatureliness and the mystery of creation, without mistaking the creation for the Creator.

In the final section, John Webster and Jonathan R. Wilson respond to the previous essays. Webster worries that the broadening of perspectives has gone too far; he fears that a broader perspective will dilute the traditional evangelical emphasis on grace. By contrast, Wilson suggests ways in which the broadening has not gone far enough.

This volume is sorely needed. Evangelical soteriology, especially at the popular level, does not do justice to the richness of the biblical view of salvation and contributes to weakness in evangelical ecclesiology, spirituality, and ethics. The greatest strength of the essays is their attempt to place salvation in a more comprehensive context. The contributors generally succeed in their aim. They encourage us to look outward and forward to counter an evangelical perspective that is individualized, privatized, and otherworldly. They attempt to bring the doctrine of salvation to bear on contemporary social issues such as racism, sexism, economics, and ecology. They remind us of the biblical vision of a redeemed people worshiping and serving the Lord in a redeemed creation.

Nevertheless, their efforts, while necessary and commendable, remain rather limited. The essay by Blocher, in particular, seems to narrow rather than broaden the view. More challenging perspectives might have been added by representatives from contexts outside Europe and America. Stackhouse laments that their "attempts to include participants from the Two-Thirds World were frustrated at every turn" (10). It is instructive that one of the best essays—the response by Wilson—highlights the tasks that still remain: the need to develop a fully trinitarian soteriology, the need for a more vigorous evangelical ecclesiology, the need to engage recent reexaminations of the



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doctrine of justification. These essays provide a thoughtful and accessible beginning; we should hope that the conversation will continue.

Brenda B. Colijn

Dale R. Stoffer, ed., *The Lord's Supper: Believers Church Perspectives* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1997. 334 pp., paper, \$24.99.

This volume is a collection of essays that were first presented at the Eleventh Believers Church Conference at Ashland Theological Seminary in Ashland, Ohio in 1994. As the subtitle suggests, the purpose of the conference was to explore biblical, historical, and theological perspectives on the Lord's Supper, with special emphasis on believers church perspectives. As editor Dale Stoffer notes in his preface, while baptism has been the subject of much discussion and debate within believers church traditions, the Lord's Supper has received very little attention (11). The present volume makes a significant contribution toward correcting that omission.

Participants represent several churches in the believers church or free church traditions. Believers churches are those groups that require confession of faith in Jesus Christ for membership, usually attested by water baptism. Free churches are distinguished from state-sponsored or territorial churches, in which everyone in a particular territory is considered a member of the church. This conference included a broad representation of believers church groups, as well as respondents from the Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions.

The book is divided into six parts. The first section surveys perspectives on the Lord's Supper in the early church through the medieval period (Everett Ferguson), during the Reformation (William R. Estep), and within the believers church tradition (Donald F. Durnbaugh). In the second section, Ben Witherington III discusses the Lord's Supper in its first-century context. The third section consists of theological proposals by Merle D. Strege, Robert G. Clouse, and Marlin Jeschke. These essays address the ways in which ecclesiology, eschatology, and church/state relations affect our understanding of the Lord's Supper, and they explore the political and social implications of our practice.

The fourth and longest section is devoted to denominational perspectives. The first four presentations deal with the Brethren practice of threefold communion. Dale R. Stoffer provides a general introduction; the other three essays focus on the agape meal or love feast (Jeff Bach), footwashing (John Christopher Thomas), and the eucharist (Dale R. Stoffer). The remaining essays present perspectives from various free church traditions: Disciples of Christ, Churches of Christ, and Christian Churches (John Mills); Quakers (T. Canby Jones); Seventh-Day Adventists (Peter M. van Bemmelen); Free Methodists (Howard A. Snyder); African Methodist Episcopal Church (Thomas L. McCray); Moravians (Kevin C. Frack); and Baptists (William H. Brackney).

The fifth section includes supplementary presentations by Rita Halteman Finger, Thomas Finger, and John D. Rempel, who introduces his book, *The Lord's Supper in Anabaptism*. The final section places the discussion in a more ecumenical context, with reflections on the conference by Timothy George and by the findings



committee, as well as responses from David Ewert (Mennonite Brethren), Jeffrey Gros (Roman Catholic), William H. Brackney (Baptist), and Vladimir Berzonsky (Orthodox). An appendix provides resources on the Believers Church Conferences and describes the first twelve conferences with their associated publications.

These essays ably demonstrate the depth and variety of believers church thinking on the Lord's Supper. The breadth of representation is one of the central strengths of the volume. In deference to the Brethren context of the conference at Ashland Seminary, the Brethren perspective is highlighted. Mennonites are also well represented in the theological proposals and the supplemental presentations. Perspectives from outside the believers church tradition (Roman Catholic and Orthodox), from mediating traditions (Wesleyan/Methodist), and from a believers church that does not practice the Lord's Supper (Quaker) give the discussion greater resonance and provide suggestions for ecumenical dialogue. Extensive footnotes contain resources for further study.

The essays refute the generally held notion that believers churches hold a simple memorial view of the Lord's Supper. For example, they argue that the rite not only looks backward to Christ's death and resurrection, but also expresses Christ's continuing presence with his people and anticipates the eschatological marriage feast upon his return (286). Furthermore, they debate how the idea of memorial itself should be understood—whether as mental recollection or as a re-presentation of the Christ event (287). The elements of the Lord's Supper are not mere symbols but are vehicles of spiritual blessing when received by faith (189). As several essays point out, the Lord's Supper is not simply an individual experience but has communal, social, and ethical dimensions. Although they agree that something actually happens at the Lord's Supper, the writers do not agree on whether the term "sacrament" should be used to describe it. They are not even in complete consensus about the nature of the presence of Christ at the Supper.

The denominational perspectives reveal expected differences in practice, including the frequency of communion, elements used, and structure (from the eucharist alone to the Brethren threefold form). Several essays address the relationship between participation in the Lord's Supper and qualifications for church membership. Although the traditions differ in how they handle self-examination before the Lord's Supper, they generally practice open communion and exercise church discipline less often today than in the past.

This volume makes a solid contribution to a neglected area of believers church theology. It would be of benefit to readers both inside and outside the believers church tradition. It should be essential reading for free church scholars, students, pastors, and teachers. It challenges believers churches to move beyond a simplistic understanding of the Lord's Supper and to fully integrate their theology with their practice. Brethren should find it particularly helpful because of the essays on threefold communion and the interaction of other essays with Brethren practices. Several non-Brethren participants argue for the restoration of the New Testament form of the Lord's Supper, advocating footwashing and especially the agape meal.

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Outside the believers church tradition, this book is a helpful resource for anyone interested in ecclesiology. It makes free church theology and practice accessible to a wider audience, and its ecumenical dialogue can serve as a basis for further discussion. The concluding challenges issued by the Findings Committee, including the call to avoid discrimination at the Lord's table, are worthy of consideration by all Christian traditions.

Brenda B. Colijn

Will Vaus, *Mere Theology: A Guide to the Thought of C. S. Lewis*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004. 266pp., paper, \$20.00.

This book needs a defender, and who steps up to write its Foreword but C. S. Lewis's stepson Douglas Gresham? "For a long time I have known that sooner or later, someone would write a book like this .... It has always worried me that some insufficient scholar or closed-minded religionist would come up with an attempt to translate Jack's (C. S. Lewis's) theology into the terms of his or her personal beliefs, lose sight of the real depths of Jack's thinking and thus leave readers enmired in a morass of misunderstood ideas and half-baked theories. With this book Will Vaus has allayed all my trepidation" (p. 9). If *Mere Theology* needs a defense, it would be hard to imagine a better one!

Vaus comes to his task as a lifelong lover of C. S. Lewis and his works. He began in the elementary grades to read the Oxford don and traveled to England at nineteen to visit the sites associated with Lewis's life. A graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary, he has pastored in several states and is now the president of Will Vaus Ministries, an international creative communications outreach. He brings to this book not only his study of Lewis but also his friendship with persons close to Lewis such as the late Sheldon Vanauken (author of *A Severe Mercy*, 1977), Douglas Gresham (author of *Lenten Lands*, 1994), and Lewis's personal secretary Fr. Walter Hooper (author of *C. S. Lewis Companion and Guide*, 1996).

The book's concept is simple: (1) survey the thought of Lewis on the major *loci* of Christian doctrine; (2) consider all his known writings, whether apologetics, theological essays, literary criticism, children's stories, science fiction, adult novels, or personal correspondence; and (3) approach each topic in the chronological order of his writings.

*Mere Theology* therefore opens with a chapter on Lewis's defense of Christian faith and then takes up his approach to scripture, the trinity, creation, etc., concluding with hell, purgatory, heaven (the book's longest chapter), and "the world's last night." Combing through about forty books in diverse genres plus thousands of letters means that Vaus has engaged in an enormous amount of research. Even with available indexes and bibliographies, the task would still be daunting. He has persevered, however, in order to offer interested readers his roadmap to "a mind fully awake."

Any summary of the thought and writing of another person can sooner or later grow leaden. But Vaus writes in a generally engaging style that is attractive to read, even when he disagrees with Lewis. The great value of the book is the breadth of its

coverage—trying to survey everything Lewis wrote—and its chronological approach. The latter appears most strikingly in Chapter 4, “God’s Sovereignty and Human Responsibility.” By moving through Lewis’s writings in sequence Vaus shows that early in his Christian experience Lewis emphasized human ability and the choice of Christ. In later years his thinking tilted the other way, acknowledging that without God’s choosing him, he would not have chosen Christ. Lewis finally left the matter unresolved, relying on such statements as this from one of his friends, theologian Austin Farrer: “The assistance of God does not remove the reality of our decisions; when we are most in God, then we are most freely ourselves” (p. 60).

The more of C. S. Lewis one has read and enjoyed, the more one will enjoy *Mere Theology*. Each of its twenty-five chapters is documented with numerous notes, and the whole concludes with a bibliography and indexes of subjects and scripture. We owe Will Vaus hearty thanks for this “guide to the thought of C. S. Lewis.” His book deserves an honored place among the key reference works on this fascinating disciple of Christ.

Jerry R. Flora

Robert E. Webber. *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002. 288 pp., paper, \$16.99.

Robert Webber’s latest book should be particularly interesting to those whose views of the emerging generations of evangelicals have been informed by Richard Quebedeaux’s *Young Evangelicals* (1974) and *The Worldly Evangelicals* (1980) as well as James Davison Hunter’s *Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation* (1987). These earlier accounts had suggested that evangelicalism was losing its moral, sociological, and theological boundaries. The conclusion seemed to be that younger evangelicals were becoming more secularized and, for Quebedeaux, that the rising “evangelical left” would ineluctably trail off into theological liberalism.

If Webber’s account is correct, and at the descriptive level there is much to commend it, the current generation of younger evangelicals belies these ominous predictions. Although many have rejected the programmatic and methodological assumptions of classic evangelical activism, they have redoubled their commitment to the historic creeds of the church and re-normed their adherence to classic Christian virtues such as simplicity, chastity, and meditation. It may turn out, ironically, that the noticeable decline of classic evangelical norms in the latter half of the twentieth century was not a preparation for an inevitable drift into liberalism or normless secularism but a necessary precursor for a re-engagement with older Christian practices.

Webber’s account of the emerging generation of evangelical leaders rings true with my own experience with younger evangelicals. They have indeed turned away from the institutional structures and methodologies so dear to their grandparents. (Their parents were more ambivalent about these practices.) Many younger evangelicals are deeply interested in the history of church and its previous practices and disciplines. Their experience in large, impersonal institutions has been formative. They simply will not, as



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Webber clearly demonstrates, minister in settings that resist embodiment in durable personal relations. Webber's account of these developments is illuminating.

Regrettably, the analytic apparatus that Webber brings to these developments is deficient. His periodization is unhelpful. His account of the transition from "traditional," to "pragmatic" and "younger" evangelicalism provides little assistance in understanding why it is that North American evangelicalism followed this trajectory. This reader found himself constantly wondering how can we understand the emergence of younger evangelicals in relation to previous modes of evangelical, cultural, and intellectual life? To simply chronicle a series of hermetically sealed periods, each with its distinctive characteristics, is deeply unsatisfactory.

Webber's account of the transition from modernity to post-modernity is equally unsatisfying. In places, he offers a purely stereotypical understanding of the evils of modernity and an almost naïve acquiescence in the tenets of post-modernity. For instance, he alleges that systematic and rationalistic thinking was peculiar to the Enlightenment (167). If that is true, how does the systematic and rationalistic thinking of Augustine, Aquinas, and Calvin fit with this scheme? Further, is it the case that modernity has ceased to exist, as Webber claims (167)? Has the modern church similarly ceased to exist as he claims elsewhere? What seems to be missing in Webber's analysis is any vantage point from which his reader might understand these periods and transitions as part of the broader transformation of western culture.

This irrational periodization prevents Webber and many younger evangelicals from noticing the modernistic elements that penetrate their post-modernity. For instance, the rhetoric of relationships, values, and intentional community persist in the accounts given by the younger evangelicals and Webber. Each of these notions can be traced back to modern (and ultimately, pre-modern) voluntarist theories that reached their apogee in the Enlightenment. Post-modern reliance on these notions represents a clear and persistent entanglement with modernism. It is no wonder that some theorists doubt whether there is such a thing as post-modernism; it may be merely a self-conscious form of modernism.

Webber has left us with very little indication of the prevalence of these developments among the emerging generation of evangelicals. Regrettably, much of his information has been extracted from his students who are likely presorted with respect to these trends. His solicited anecdotes are unable to characterize the true scope of these developments. What can be said for "youngish" evangelicals who are still committed to pragmatic evangelicalism? How do their numbers and influence compare with Webber's "younger" evangelicals? It seems that we must have some way to gauge the proportion of "younger" to "youngish" evangelicals and the relation of these developments within evangelicalism to parallel developments in other confessional groups and non-churched young adults generally.

Webber's book provides what one reviewer calls a "report from the front." It certainly provides a service in describing what is obviously a new mode of evangelical engagement with the world. It fails, however, to provide much assistance in appraising these developments. Webber has not only neglected to provide a critical assessment of younger evangelicalism but has, in its stead, relied on a thin periodization. This reliance



is particularly egregious in Webber's case, since it perpetuates the analytic models so popular in the heyday of traditionalist evangelicalism.

Joel L. From, Briercrest College

*Early Christian Reader*, with introductions and annotations by Steve Mason and Tom Robinson. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003. cloth. \$39.95.

This book is a cross between Bart Ehrman's *The New Testament and Other Early Christian Writings: A Reader* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition; Oxford: OUP, 2003) and a standard Study Bible. The editors have included all of the writings of the New Testament plus a few other important Christian texts from the turn of the first century, namely the Gospel of Thomas, the Didache, the Epistle of Barnabas, 1 Clement, and the seven letters of Ignatius. Fine introductions discussing the state of the question of authorship, setting, date, "themes and issues," relationship to other Christian literature, and value for the study of early Christianity, as well as generous notes, accompany each text. In terms of annotations, this collection is stronger than most study Bibles on the market. The notes are more detailed, give appropriate attention to issues of background, use of other resources, and the like.

In terms of selection of texts, this collection compares rather poorly with Ehrman's volume. No Gnostic or proto-Gnostic texts are represented beyond the Gospel of Thomas, which is also the only extra-canonical Gospel included. No representative of "New Testament Apocrypha" (such as the Apocalypse of Peter, an early and highly influential book) is present. Several of the texts normally included in the Apostolic Fathers are absent (Letter of Polycarp, Martyrdom of Polycarp, Shepherd of Hermas, *inter alia*), even though the collection otherwise is limited to New Testament, Apostolic Fathers, and Gospel of Thomas. If we understand "second century" in the collection's subtitle to mean "works that can be dated in all probability to the first quarter of the second century," this helps explain the contours of the collection, but such a terminus falls far short of representing the diversity within even mainstream "orthodox" Christianity, let alone all its representative voices even as far as Justin Martyr.

In summary, this is a well-done work, but it is difficult to know what niche it will fill. I would not prefer it to Ehrman's collection in a course on early Christianity. I would also be hard pressed to use it for a course on the Apostolic Fathers or second-century Christianity. I would be most likely to use it as a recommended "Annotated New Testament with helpful extras," though even this would ultimately not serve my students; needs since we work so much with the Jewish Scriptures as well in New Testament Introduction.

David A. deSilva

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Philip F. Esler (ed.), *The Early Christian World*. 2 volumes. London: Routledge, 2000. 1342 pp, cloth, \$295.00/ paper, \$78.95.

*The Early Christian World* is a compendious introduction to the first four centuries of the Christian movement and the social, cultural, and political world that surrounded it. It has pride of place as the standard reference work to the topics it treats, and draws from the ranks of contributors who are well versed in social-scientific, cultural-anthropological, and ideological criticism, thus bringing new interdisciplinary paradigms to the study of early Christian history in addition to the foundations of historical-critical, tradition-critical, and other more established avenues of inquiry.

The volume is divided into nine parts. The first sets the Christian movement solidly in the context of the Mediterranean world of late antiquity, including the following contributions: "The Mediterranean context of early Christianity" (Philip Esler); "Armies, emperors and bureaucrats" (Jill Harries); "Graeco-Roman philosophy and religion" (Luther Martin); "Jewish tradition and culture" (James Aitken). The second part examines topics relevant to the development of early Christianity, with essays on "The Galilean world of Jesus" (Sean Freyne); "Early Jewish Christianity" (David Horrell); "Paul and the development of gentile Christianity" (Todd Klutz); "The Jesus tradition: The gospel writers' strategies of persuasion" (Richard Rohrbaugh); "Christianity in the second and third centuries" (Jeffrey Siker); "From Constantine to Theodosius (and beyond)" (Bill Leadbetter). Part three looks more closely at the institutional expansion of Christianity through "Mission and expansion" (Thomas Finn), "The development of office in the early church" (Mark Edwards), "Christian regional diversity" (David Taylor), and "Monasticism" (Columba Stewart, OSB). Part four attempts to balance the more diachronic approaches of parts two and three with topical explorations related to "everyday Christian experience." Here one finds essays on "Social levels, morals and daily life" (Bruce Malina), "Sex and sexual renunciation" (Teresa Shaw), "Women, worship and mission: the church in the household" (Gillian Cloke), "Communication and travel" (Blake Leyerle), and "Worship, practice and belief" (Maxwell Johnson).

Parts five and six examine the intellectual and artistic heritage of the early church, the latter section representing a truly innovative balance to the typical interest only in the "ideas" of the patristic period. Contributions to Part Five include "The Apostolic Fathers" (Carolyn Osiek), "The Apologists" (Eric Osborn), "The early theologians" (Gerald Bray), "later theologians of the Greek East" (Andrew Louth), "Later theologians of the West" (Ivor Davidson), "Creeds, councils and doctrinal development" (Trevor Hart), and "Biblical interpretation" (Oskar Skarsaune). Part Six explores "Architecture: the first five centuries" (L. Michael White), "Art" (Robin Jensen), "Music" (James McKinnon), and "Imaginative Literature" (Richard Bauckham).

The seventh and eighth sections offer analyses of challenges to the emerging Christian movement from outside (with essays on "Martyrdom and political oppression" by W. H. C. Frend, "Graeco-Roman philosophical opposition" by Michael Simmons, and "Popular Graeco-Roman responses to Christianity" by Craig de Vos) and within (with essays on "Internal renewal and dissent in the early Christian world" by Sheila McGinn,

"Gnosticism" by Alastair Logan, "Montanism" by Christine Trevett, "Donatism" by James Alexander, and "Arianism" by David Rankin).

The final section offers profiles of leading Christians from the second through the fourth centuries, including Origen (Fred Norris), Tertullian (David Wright), Perpetua and Felicitas (Ross Kraemet and Shira Lander), Constantine (Bill Leadbetter), Anthony of the Desert (Columba Stewart, OSB), Athanasius (David Brakke), John Chrysostom (Pauline Allen and Wendy Mayer), Jerome (Dennis Brown), Ambrose (Ivor Davidson), Augustine (Carol Harrison), and Ephrem the Syrian (Kathleen McVey), closing, perhaps a bit subversively, with Julian the Apostate (Michael Simmons).

Written by acknowledged experts in each field, this work is a necessary resource for every institutional library.

David A. deSilva

Robert T. Anderson and Terry Giles. *The Keepers: An Introduction to the History and Culture of the Samaritans*. Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.: Peabody, Massachusetts, 2002. 165 pp, hardcover, \$29.95.

When confronted with the term "Samaritan", many of us automatically think of the New Testament parable of "The Good Samaritan" (Luke 10:29-37). Whereas this alone is not something to be embarrassed about, the underlying truth is that most of us don't know much more than this parable regarding the Samaritans. In their book, *The Keepers: An Introduction to the History and Culture of the Samaritans*, Robert T. Anderson and Terry Giles utilize historical, archaeological, and literary evidence to enlighten their readers to the rich background and customs of the Samaritan sect. Beginning with both the Samaritan and Jewish version of the Samaritan origins, Anderson and Giles give a history of the Samaritans through the various historical periods after the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles, including the Persian, Hellenistic, Roman (including biblical and extra biblical references), Byzantine, Islamic, and Modern periods.

This history is enhanced by the story and description of the Chamberlain-Warren Samaritan Collection, which was stored, and forgotten about, for eighteen years in cardboard boxes in a room under the Michigan State University football stadium (!). A Samaritan inscription that was thought to have disappeared and who's only proof of existence was a casting made of it in the early 1900's was found in this amazing collection. Also found under the stadium were a brass Pentateuch scroll case and several Samaritan manuscripts that acquaint the reader with the Samaritan Pentateuch, priesthood and religious rituals.

The last few chapters of *The Keepers* focus on two unique features of the Samaritan culture: the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Samaritan religion. The chapter on the Pentateuch provides fascinating information on the characteristics of the Pentateuchal manuscripts themselves. For instance, the scribes included at least one acrostic and bill of sale on each Pentateuchal scroll, which provide us with information on people, locations, production of the manuscript, events and organizations. The recent fascination



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with the Samaritan Pentateuch has provided biblical scholars with textual artifacts that contribute to textual, canonical and social-scientific criticism. The chapter on religion outlines some of the foundational practices and theologies of the Samaritans. Anderson and Giles make note of the relationship between the Samaritan religion and not only Judaism, but Islam as well. The sacred location of Mt. Gerazim is also presented in this chapter, including a discussion on the archaeological evidence of the Samaritan temple.

*The Keepers* provides students and scholars alike with valuable information regarding this amazing group of survivors. The blend of history, text and archaeological evidence presents a solid introduction that will both enlighten the reader and encourage them to learn more about the Samaritans.

Cynthia Shafer-Elliott

Donald K. McKim, editor. *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. 338 pp. cloth/paper, \$60.00/21.99.

*The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther* presents a series of essays by expert scholars in Luther's life and context, his work, his legacy, and his significance for the contemporary world. In his preface, editor Donald McKim hopes that "Scholars will mine much from this treasury but beginning students even more."

Part One, "Luther's Life and Context," begins with the essay "Luther's Life" by Albrecht Beutel, translated by Katharina Gustavs. Beutel outlines the key events in the life of the reformer as well as the ideas that influenced him. He suggests that Luther's reformation breakthrough was not so much an event as it was a process, beginning with his criticism of scholastic theology and his efforts to examine theological ideas from the Bible's perspective rather than that of church authorities. Luther used this approach to great effect not only in his lectures but in his preaching as well. Beutel comments on a number of Luther's more significant works, showing how they relate to the context in which they were written.

Helmar Junghans follows with an essay describing the political and theological situation of "Luther's Wittenberg" (again translated by Katharina Gustavs). Beginning with the Wittenberg of some centuries before Luther's arrival, Junghans shows how the atmosphere of the town influenced Luther, and how the presence of Luther influenced the town after his departure, even into the twentieth century. Junghans weaves together well the threads of politics and theology and presents Wittenberg as more than merely a town, but as a tapestry of ideas in which the Reformation was born.

Part Two examines Luther's work in ten essays. Timothy F. Lull begins with a survey of "Luther's Writings" available in English translation. This essay would be a good place to start for beginners who are looking for a list of Luther's works, as Lull not only names the works but summarizes each in a sentence or two. He arranges his discussion of Luther's works categorically rather than chronologically, and concludes with a section on "The pleasure of reading Luther."

Eric W. Gritsch's discussion of "Luther as Bible Translator" includes more than an account of the translation process. Gritsch also examines the contributions of



Luther's associates to his efforts and various controversies that affected his work, and concludes with a section on the marketing and distribution of Luther's works. Oswald Bayer's essay on "Luther as an Interpreter of Holy Scripture" (translated by Mark Mattes) shows that Luther's efforts not only influenced the German language linguistically but philosophically as well. Markus Wriedt admits that "Luther's Theology" (translated by Katharina Gustavs) is a huge and complex topic to discuss in a single essay. He limits his efforts to describing Luther's "Reformation discovery" (of justification of the sinner by the grace of God) and then analyzing how Luther refined and developed this discovery in the fires of successive controversies. Bernd Wannenwetsch warns that a proper discussion of "Luther's Moral Theology" must include a discussion of Luther's ethics in the context of his theology, and it must take into consideration the exceptional degree to which Luther's ethics have been subject to interpretation by others since his death. Fred W. Meuser writes on "Luther as Preacher of the Word of God," discussing not only the content and style of Luther's sermons but also Luther's theology of the activity of preaching: in this area, Meuser says, "Luther's great insight was that God is present primarily through the message about God." Jane E. Strohl outlines "Luther's Spiritual Journey," proposing that Luther's spirituality may be described as one of polarities since he conceived of many key spiritual concepts as paradoxes that are largely unresolved in this life (e.g., his *simul iustus et peccator*).

Luther was a theologian and a pastor, but was called upon many times for his opinion on issues in society not directly related to the preaching of the Gospel. Carter Lindberg reminds us in "Luther's Struggle with Social-Ethical Issues" that his ethics should be understood in context of pastoral care, and his comments and opinions in these areas flow primarily from his perception that his own vocation was to proclaim the Word of God. David M. Whitford discusses "Luther's Political Encounters" as they occurred not only in the context of the political situations of his day but also in the context of his theology in general. This section ends with Mark U. Edwards, Jr.'s, essay on "Luther's Polemical Controversies," in which he examines Luther's polemics especially as influenced by the role of printing, Luther's worldview and the developing Reformation movement. Edwards also tackles the difficult problem of interpreting Luther's late polemical works, seemingly so full of bitterness against the "papists" and the "Jews."

Part Three, "After Luther," begins with Robert Kolb's essay on "Luther's Function in an Age of Confessionalization." Kolb examines the work of Luther in the judgment of his contemporaries, his students and his opponents, and he comments on the continued influence of Luther's thought on the development of later Lutheran confessions. Hans J. Hillerbrand suggests that three facets interweave to mold "The Legacy of Martin Luther": judgments about the person of Luther himself, evaluation of his theology, and assessments of his ecclesiastical influence. He also briefly reminds readers that Luther's legacy was not limited to the German lands but reached into Scandinavia as well, and from there to North America. James Arne Nestingen cautions his readers that the chief difficulty in "Approaching Luther" is in discerning the distinction between Luther as historical figure and Luther as cultural symbol. In order to do this well the serious student should not merely consider the facts of Luther's life but also his writings and even secondary sources about him.

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Part Four presents three essays on "Luther Today." James M. Kittelson's essay on "Luther and Modern Church History" is not an outline of church history since the time of Luther but rather a discussion of the manner in which Luther's thought continues to influence contemporary Christianity. Robert W. Jenson's essay "Luther's Contemporary Theological Significance" begins with the caution that since Luther's time the ongoing theological discussion has included so many more influences and ideas that ultimately any judgment about Luther's contemporary significance is primarily the view of the individual interpreter. For the purposes of this essay Jenson discusses Luther's influence in a Western church that is fragmented into a multitude of denominations, and in a Western culture that can no longer be relied on to support the work and beliefs of Christianity. Guenther Gassmann's essay "Luther in the Worldwide Church Today" concludes this volume by arguing that today's worldwide church has succeeded in liberating Martin Luther from his previous nationalistic and confessional captivity. After centuries of being the cultural property of Germany or the theological property of Lutherans, the process of freeing Luther has been undertaken by movements as diverse as the "Luther renaissance," the Roman Catholic Church, and the worldwide ecumenical movement.

Not only are the essays in this volume well-written, but their arrangement into general topics is convenient and useful as well. The volume concludes with a "Select Bibliography," arranged topically, and a fairly thorough index. As editor Donald McKim hoped, this volume indeed has much to recommend it to the beginning student of Luther's life, work and influence, and also much to give the experienced Luther scholar pause for thought and study.

Christopher T. Cahill, Lodi, Ohio

Patrick Collinson, Richard Rex and Graham Stanton, *Lady Margaret Beaufort and Her Professors of Divinity 1502-1649*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 97, \$15.00.

An introduction, two chapters and four appendices are all that comprise this small book, which commemorates the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Lady Margaret Professorship of Divinity at Cambridge University. However, the book covers one of the most significant periods of English history, and virtually every page rewards the effort of the serious reader. There are brief sketches and intriguing insights about many of the notable churchmen of England who served as Lady Margaret Professors across the last five centuries.

Graham Stanton, current holder of the Lady Margaret Chair at Cambridge, provides a splendid introduction to the book. He covers the beginnings of Cambridge University, and later the generosity of Lady Margaret, which led to the endowment of chairs in divinity at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Since the Rex and Collinson chapters cover the occupants of the chair at Cambridge during the first century and a half of its existence, he completes the story with exemplary professors since the Puritan period. Names like William Selwyn, J.B. Lightfoot (Stanton's choice as the

greatest of the professors who held the post over the half-millennium of its tenure, p. 12), and F.J.A. Hort at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century signal a change in the lectureship, which has in recent decades become the convention for the Lady Margaret Professorship: the chair is awarded to a professor of New Testament studies. Witness to this are the last three recipients: C.F.D. Moule, Morna D. Hooker ("a Methodist, the first non-Anglican since 1660 to hold the Professorship, and the first woman to hold a chair in Divinity at either Oxford or Cambridge....", p. 17), and Graham Stanton.

Dr. Rex opens his chapter with the story of how the Professorship was established through the influence of Cambridge's John Fisher upon Lady Margaret Beaufort (mother of Henry VII). Fisher became the first official occupant of the chair once it was fully endowed. He lived in an exciting but turbulent era, bringing Erasmus to Cambridge early in his tenure but concluding his work as a martyr under Henry VIII. He was, as Professor Rex observes, probably the only first incumbent of a university chair to experience such a fate; but before the century closed, four additional occupants of the chair also died for being on the wrong side when religion and politics changed (p. 27).

Professor Collinson is widely recognized as one of the foremost scholars on English Puritanism, and his chapter on the century between the accession of Elizabeth I to the eve of the commonwealth period reflects his expertise. He portrays the holders of the chair against the background of the rise of ecclesiastical Puritanism, the Synod of Dort, the eventual trend toward Arminianism and the event of the English Civil War. His discussion of the period and its leading personalities (Lady Margaret Professors, polemicists, and the Archbishops of Canterbury) is characterized by wit and candor, as befits the oral style in which it was first presented.

It is a pity that the title of the book will appeal only to a select audience of Cambridge enthusiasts. It is the kind of book where one learns more than expected; it also demonstrates that history is intended for pleasure as well as for information.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Paul F.M. Zahl, *Five Women of the English Reformation*. Grand Rapids: Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001, pp. 120, \$18.00.

Anne Boleyn (1507-1536), Anne Askew (c. 1521-1546), Katharine Parr (1514-1548), Jane Grey (1537-1554), and Catherine Willoughby (1520-1580) – arranged chronologically by the date of their death – are the subjects of Zahl's study of significant women of the sixteenth century Protestant reformation in England. Interesting personal and historical connections link these women, and they stand as examples of courage, conviction, and theological expression among, and sometimes against, many of the better-known men of the same period. Through their personal stories and their writings, Zahl gives them a persona in an age that was more prone to devour its strong characters than to lionize them.

While one expects five miniature biographies, the author's major interest is the theology which defined these women and the roles they played. Specifically, Zahl



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chooses women who supported Protestant theology, with an emphasis upon justification by faith. He even dismisses Elizabeth I as being "a daughter, not the mother of the English Reformation" (pp. 7-8). His theological axe severs religious heads as deftly as those that killed several of his heroines. Those who prefer a more tolerant treatment of England's women of faith are better served through Roland Bainton's *Women of the Reformation in France and England*. The author's theological axe also menaces historical periods in all their complexity. He projects three stages of Protestant development upon his subjects (pp. 31 and 85). The first stage concerns justification by faith; the second traces implications of justification in regard to sacraments (especially the mass); and the third culminates in Puritan Calvinism and issues of election and predestination. As observations on the course of reformation debate, these periods could have some utility. But they seem to be pushed by the author into an evolutionary process of religious development. Thus, he speculates that Lady Jane Grey, who was beheaded in the second period, would have moved on to issues of election and the sovereign will of God had she lived longer (p. 70). However, Catherine Willoughby does live in his third period and personally espoused Calvinist ideas of providence; yet, she is faulted for not letting her theology triumph over her personal difficulties. One has to question, then, whether theology – especially one with a strong bias – is a good lens with which to view history.

The five women presented in the book are all worthy of praise. The author follows a pattern of discussion in each of the chapters: their personal story, the texts they left for posterity (nicely excerpted in appendices A through E), their theology, and the author's interpretation of their life and thought. The strength of the book is the material covered in the first three divisions of the chapters. Here are found all kinds of historical tidbits to satisfy the reader and to demonstrate the author's ability to follow trails of evidence to intriguing sources and insights.

The book concludes happily with a brief epilogue by the author's wife, Mary Zahl. While she shares her husband's evangelical faith, she identifies closely with the women of the book to a degree that her husband achieved only in his chapter on Lady Jane Grey. She grasps what is significant about these women as models of faith for our age. She lets the women out of the theological straightjacket her husband had placed upon them. With fresh breath, they speak to our lives. At least in the estimation of this reviewer, one can only wish that she would have had a larger role in shaping the interpretation of these women of faith.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Thieleman J. van Braght, *Martyrs Mirror*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1998. 1158 pages, paper, \$37.50.

*Martyrs Mirror* is an Anabaptist classic. In Mennonite homes it has had an influence second only to that of the Bible. It was first published in Dutch in 1660. The first English edition appeared in 1837. The nineteenth printing of the English edition makes this classic available in a usable softcover edition.



The contents of the work are well summarized by its full title: *The Bloody Theatre or Martyrs Mirror of the Defenseless Christians Who Baptized Only Upon Confession of Faith, and Who Suffered and Died for the Testimony of Jesus, Their Saviour, From the Time of Christ to the Year A. D. 1660*. The title draws upon the idea of martyrdom as both a witness to the faith and a spectacle before the world. The purpose of the work, as with other martyr collections, is to validate the faith of the martyrs and strengthen the faith of their spiritual descendants.

The uniqueness of this work is its focus on Anabaptist martyrs. The more familiar *Fox's Book of Martyrs*, written by John Fox in the mid-sixteenth century to validate Protestants martyred by the Catholic Church, includes no Anabaptists. Anabaptism (the term means "rebaptism") was a Reformation movement in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands composed of groups that practiced believer baptism rather than infant baptism. Anabaptists stressed the need for every person to be born again, to make a personal commitment to Christ through baptism, to follow Christ in discipleship, to be part of a caring and accountable community, and to practice nonviolence. Denominations descended from or strongly influenced by Anabaptism include Mennonites, Hutterites, Brethren, and Brethren in Christ.

As the only Reformation movement that was not based on the state-church model but on voluntary church membership, the Anabaptists were persecuted not only by the Catholics but also by other Protestant groups. Infant baptism was a foundational rite of the established church and an important tool of the state (since the baptismal rolls also served as the tax rolls). Rebaptism had been a capital crime since the code of Emperor Justinian in 529. Several thousand Anabaptists were martyred in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. To give meaning to the persecution they endured, the Anabaptists collected martyr stories and located themselves in an ancient tradition of faithful witnesses. They used these stories in personal and family devotions, as well as in corporate worship. This heritage helped shape the spiritual identity of generations of Anabaptists.

*Martyrs Mirror* is divided into two parts. The first part proceeds chronologically from the first through the fifteenth centuries, providing for each century an account of baptism during that period followed by accounts of those martyred during that period. The second part brings the survey up to the seventeenth century and adds three indexes: martyrs, popes and Roman emperors, and a general index.

The martyr accounts consist of narratives, trial records, letters, prayers, hymns, and confessions. They vary in length from a short paragraph to multiple two-column pages. One of the better known stories is that of Dirk Willems, who was martyred in the Netherlands in 1569. He had made his escape across a frozen river when he noticed that his pursuer had fallen through the ice behind him and was drowning. Rather than save his own life, he turned back to pull the man out of the water. As a result, he was apprehended and was burned at the stake. The account of Maeyken Wens includes poignant letters she wrote to her husband and son from prison, attempting to comfort them as she awaited her execution. She was burned at the stake in 1573.

*Martyrs Mirror* is indispensable for anyone who wants to understand the spirit of Anabaptism. It remains edifying reading for anyone who takes the Christian faith

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seriously. All Christians can be inspired and challenged by these accounts of people of faith who were willing to follow Christ whatever the cost. These stories remind us that brothers and sisters have given their lives for principles such as freedom of conscience that some of us take for granted today.

Brenda B. Colijn

James M. Penning and Corwin E. Smidt. *Evangelicalism: The Next Generation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002. 208 pp., paper.

In *Evangelicalism: The Next Generation*, James Penning and Corwin Smidt provide a timely follow-up to James Davison Hunter's influential *Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation*. Based on data collected in 1982, Hunter concluded that for a large percentage of young evangelicals the Protestant legacy of austerity and self-denial was all but extinct. Evangelical educators were particularly troubled by Hunter's contention that their institutions accelerated this accommodation to the larger culture. Hunter offered little hope that evangelicalism could regenerate itself; the normative boundaries essential to evangelicalism seemed destined to dissipate into mainstream American culture.

Penning and Smidt replicated Hunter's study by mailing virtually identical questionnaires to randomly selected students at the evangelical institutions studied by Hunter. They found that Hunter's dire predictions were not manifest in their 1996 data. They also discovered that younger evangelicals were not more accommodated to the larger culture than older, college-educated evangelicals. Since Hunter directly compared younger evangelicals with older evangelicals without controlling for differences in educational attainment, he was not able to detect similarities among trans-generational cohorts. When these controls are applied to their data, Penning and Smidt found that younger evangelicals did not appear to be any more accommodated to American culture than their elders.

The evangelical center appears to be holding. There has been little movement away from central doctrines having to do with God's relation to the world, the nature of Christ, and the importance of conversion. And, although there has been a movement away from a strict prohibition on alcohol, which had been characteristic of earlier evangelicals, other moral norms, such as those related to sexual fidelity, are still vigorously asserted. Penning and Smidt find that although there is some change in evangelical thought and practice, there is much that is still intact, although it is true that evangelicals are increasingly tolerant in peripheral areas.

Penning and Smidt position their book as a critique of Hunter's secularization theory of social change. Their second chapter provides a good summary of some of the leading objections to this theory. Further, their findings and commentary are clearly intended to challenge Hunter in this regard. It is puzzling therefore that Penning and Smidt do not restate and develop their initial critique of the secularization thesis in the final chapters of the book. They do not carefully exploit their own findings in their critique of this model. Their book would have been strengthened if they had drawn

inferences from their findings and applied them critically to their analysis of Hunter's interpretive scheme.

Further, it is regrettable that Penning and Smidt followed Hunter's methodology so closely. In this reviewer's judgment, they should not only have replicated his questions regarding work, theology, morality, and political engagement, they also should have probed to see if there were new norms emerging within their student population. Robert Webber and others have recently argued that there is a resurgence of interest in older moral disciplines among evangelical students. There may be, in other words, declining interest in abstinence from alcohol *and* an emerging dedication to the classic Christian virtues of simplicity, chastity, and meditation. Penning and Smidt's methodology, since it relies so heavily on Hunter's, is unable to reckon with what may be an important regenerating movement within evangelicalism. It is unfortunate that their methodology cannot countenance emerging norms, especially since many of these newer norms seem to provide *prima facie* evidence against Hunter's secularization thesis.

This reviewer recommends that Hunter's book be read in conjunction with Penning and Smidt's. It would be helpful, furthermore, to consider Robert Webber's, *The Younger Evangelicals* and Alan Wolfe's, *The Transformation of American Religion*. Hunter's book is still valuable for its rich interpretive materials. Penning and Smidt provide little beyond a critique of Hunter's methodology and interpretive model. In comparison with Hunter and Wolfe, there is little here to help the reader locate evangelicalism in its broader context. If Hunter's secularization thesis does not fit the trajectory of evangelicalism, what other account does? There is little here to help with this question.

And finally, it would have been useful to this reader at least to include copies of the questionnaires used by both Penning and Smidt and Hunter. A great deal could perhaps be learned (and disputed) by carefully examining the instruments used in these studies.

Joel L. From

Larry D. Hurtado, *At the Origins of Christian Worship: The Context and Character of Earliest Christian Devotion*. Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2000. 138 pp., paper, \$16.00

This work is the book form of the author's Didsbury Lectures given at the British Isles Nazarene College in 1999. In chapter one, Dr. Hurtado, sketches the Roman religious environment. It was a world chock-full of religiosity. Groups, customs, activities, and paraphernalia were everywhere. Images, sacred places, rituals, meals abounded. There was no lack of religious activity. Thus Christianity had to compete in a very active religious market. In the first century, people didn't become Christians because there were no other options.

In chapter two, the author deals with the exclusivity of Christianity in this situation. Other religions welcomed multi-participation in ritual and practice. Christianity required the renunciation of the worship of other gods. Social intimacy,



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participation, fervor, eschatological significance, and the exhibition of divine power were all characteristics of first century Christian worship as garnered from the New Testament.

Chapter three sets forth the authors view of what he calls "binitarian devotion." Through scriptural examples of prayer, confessions, baptism, the Lord's Supper, hymns, and prophecy, he builds his case for the worship of the Father through the Son.

The concluding chapter is an attempt to apply the above material to contemporary worship concerns. Here the author deals with the place of patriarchy, transcendence, eschatology and devotion. One of the most valuable contributions of the book is the twenty page bibliography.

The author, Larry Hurtado, is professor of New Testament language, literature and theology at the University of Edinburgh.

Richard E. Allison

Peter W. Millar, ed. *An Iona Prayer Book*. Norwich, England: Canterbury Press (available through Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing), 1998. 138 pp., paper \$9.95. Ray Simpson, *A Holy Island Prayer Book*. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2003. 168 pp., paper, \$11.95.

Iona is the tiny island off the west coast of Scotland where Columba, having sailed from Ireland, founded a monastery in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. As with many ancient monastic sites, it was both a place of prayer and a missionary base. From there monks went inland to evangelize the western part of Scotland and its highlands. In the centuries that followed Iona saw both quiet glory and great suffering. More than forty kings of Ireland and Scotland were buried there, but the community also fell victim to the Viking raids of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries. Today it is a world-renowned pilgrim site visited each year by thousands of believers and seekers.

Peter Millar, former Warden of Iona Abbey, has prepared a book of readings and prayers for those who visit the island in body or in spirit. Ordained in the Church of Scotland, Millar worked for many years in South India before going to Iona. His book covers four weeks, each day of the week having prayers and scripture for morning, mid-day, and evening. The daily themes are welcome (Sunday), justice and peace (Monday), healing (Tuesday), pilgrimage (Wednesday), commitment (Thursday), celebration (Friday), and mission (Saturday). Although Iona is a site important to Celtic Christianity, Millar's wide experience enables him to draw material from the church in many parts of today's world. "This is essentially a personal prayer book," he writes, "a collection reflecting my own pilgrimage and something of my own exploration as a Christian in a post-modern society" (p. vi).

Holy Island is Lindisfarne off the east coast of England, which functioned in much the same way as Iona. Here Aidan introduced Christianity in the 7<sup>th</sup> century to the English-speaking peoples. It too is a pilgrim site today, for which Ray Simpson has authored a prayer book. An Anglican priest, Simpson lives on Holy Island and was commissioned by both Protestant and Catholic churches to pioneer in an ecumenical project there. His book is organized in the same way as *An Iona Prayer Book*, but



provides for five weeks rather than four. The daily themes are new life (Sunday), creation (Monday), peace (Tuesday), mission (Wednesday), community (Thursday), the cross (Friday), and sinners and saints (Saturday).

Simpson touches on the essence of Celtic Christianity when he writes, "It is in the ordinary, everyday things of life, and in the little things of creation that we find the presence of God and are renewed day by day" (p. vi). He suggests that readers use his book as daily prayers for a month or as "an occasional resource to dip into" (p. vii).

Both books describe parts of their respective islands in the readings for mid-day, giving the reader a sense of being present on their hallowed ground. Both books also contain pen and ink drawings and cover photographs of their respective sites. But *A Holy Island Prayer Book* makes more use of Celtic heritage. Its prayers are largely from that tradition, and it introduces readers to some of the Christian "greats" of eastern England, both men (Aidan, Cuthbert, Oswald, Columba) and women (Ebbe and Hilda).

These small paperbacks are excellent resources for bringing Celtic awareness across the centuries and miles into our lives. With their small size and user-friendly format they are easy to follow, each of them deserving repeated use.

Jerry R. Flora

R. Paul Stevens and Michael Green. *Living the Story: Biblical Spirituality for Everyday Christians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/Auckland, New Zealand: Lime Grove House Publishing Ltd./Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2003. Xvi + 222 pp., paperback. \$18.

This is a wonderful book about biblical spirituality. It is the fruit of the thought of two professors, R. Paul Stevens of Regent College and Michael Green of Wycliffe Hall, University of Oxford. They teamed up to teach Christian spirituality using the Bible as the text for the course. The classroom was full of graduate students from all over the world so there was an international flavor to the course.

In his foreword, Eugene H. Peterson writes that authentic spirituality is based upon the Bible. Peterson states, concerning the character of the authors of this book, that "Michael Green and Paul Stevens are nothing if not *involved*- committed both personally and vocationally to an evangelical integration of church and world, prayer and discipleship, learning and marketplace. It is quite wonderful to be taught by professors who not only pray what they read in Holy Scripture but also live what they teach from it" (p. viii).

Stevens and Green state the essence of biblical spirituality: "The Bible reveals the God who is the subject, the object, and the means of true spirituality" (p. x). Peterson's foreword captures the essence of their text on biblical spirituality, writing: "Reading the Bible we are immersed in the intricate tangle of human life as it is entered, addressed, confronted, saved, healed and blessed by the living God—God's Spirit breathed into human lives" (p. viii).

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There are three parts to the book, which is well-developed and organized according to biblical themes. Part I, entitled "Knowing and Loving the Triune God," focuses on worshipping Abba, being disciples of Jesus, and being temples of the Spirit.

Part II, entitled "Old Testament Spirituality," has chapters dealing with patriarchs as pilgrims of faith, prophetic spirituality, and the way of wisdom." Part III, entitled "New Testament Spirituality," has chapters focusing on experiencing fellowship, being people of prayer, engaging the struggle, healing and deliverance, being children of hope, and ambassadors of love. Both professors author different chapters and topics in a shared approach to the text. Of particular note is the Chapter 8 on "People of Prayer." This chapter offers prayer resources from the New Testament. It is particularly excellent. The index of Scripture references is also especially helpful.

The book is a rich treasure of the gifts of spirituality from the books of the Bible. It offers excellent resources for spiritual living based upon biblical themes. The resources of this book can draw us closer to God and can help us to conform our lives to Jesus in everyday living as we follow the Bible. This excellent work calls us to authentic spiritual living in the church and world. It is highly recommended for pastors and laity, seminary students, and professors. It is a valuable tool for teaching and learning. It is a helpful work that enables people to grow spiritually from the great resources of the Bible.

JoAnn Ford Watson

Leonard I. Sweet, *SoulSalsa: 17 Surprising Steps for Godly Living in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000, 224 pp.

With all the academic and theoretical discussion surrounding the topic of postmodernism, it is refreshing to read a practical book about living a God-focused life in the postmodern world. Leonard Sweet's book *SoulSalsa* is written for the average person in the church and for pastors to help them develop a more intimate relationship with Christ while simultaneously challenging the leaders of the church to become aware of the culture that surrounds them.

Leonard Sweet has written a couple of other postmodern, practical books that address how to live life to the fullest in 21<sup>st</sup>-century America. These books include *SoulTsunami* and *FaithQuakes*. His style is fun, light, and yet can get to the deep issues that surround American Christians today.

*SoulSalsa* is structured around dancing! Not just boring dancing but salsa dancing. This style of dancing incorporates both rhythm and excitement. Sweet's design helps us look how we could be living with the Gospel. He is showing us that life with Jesus is as exciting and fun as salsa dancing. We can move around life's challenges in real ways that not only help us to enhance our spiritual work but also help us see that Christian living is real. Sweet wants people to develop a "theology with legs."

The book is structured around what Sweet calls "Seventeen lifestyle requirements for membership in the postmodern body of Christ." This includes such titles as: "never graduate," "declare a sabbatical," and of course, "dance the salsa." These are all practical ways in which to live out faith in modern life. For instance, "never

graduate" is a chapter on the gifts of life-long learning. He says that "lifelong learning is being free to access our own needs and explore our curiosities, with direct access to resources to meet those needs, and with critical evaluative skills to assess how well we are doing." Then at the end of that chapter, as with every chapter, there are exercises and spiritual practices that lead you into discovery and to help you put the chapter into practice.

I found the book to be fun and challenging simultaneously. Some of the chapters and exercises would be great for Sunday school classes, Bible Studies, and small groups. I would recommend this book people who have discovered they need some fun and zip in life. It is refreshing and not highly academic.

Vickie Taylor

Phyllis Tickle, *The Divine Hours: A Manual for Prayer*. 3 vols. New York: Doubleday, 2000-1. Cloth, \$29.95 per volume.

Fixed-hour prayer has recently enjoyed an upsurge in interest. The Hebrew psalter refers to praying seven times a day (Ps. 119:164), while the NT reports that Jesus worshiped in synagogues on a regular basis (Lk. 4:16). Early Christians prayed at the stated Jewish hours of 9:00 a.m., noon, and 3:00 p.m. (Acts 2:1, 9; 3:1; 10:3, 9). This became the foundation for practice in the deserts of Egypt, the monasteries of both East and West, and--in condensed form--in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*. There, fixed-hour prayers are provided for morning, noon, evening, and bedtime (compline) together with the Psalms set out to be prayed through in one month of morning and evening devotions.

A number of books to facilitate such praying have recently appeared, but none of them is so extensive as *The Divine Hours* by Phyllis Tickle. Contributing Editor in Religion for *Publishers Weekly*, Tickle is one of the most respected leaders in American religious journalism. The book industry has honored her for lifetime achievement in writing and publishing, especially her work in gaining mainstream media coverage of publishing in religion. In addition to writing two dozen books, Tickle--a lifelong Episcopalian--has served in numerous positions of church leadership.

*The Divine Hours* is her extensive reworking of *The Book of Common Prayer* utilizing numerous other sources, all of it in contemporary language. The three volumes cover the entire church year, but they attempt to attract by setting it out in familiar seasons: *Prayers for Spring* (February through May), *Prayers for Summertime* (June through September), and *Prayers for Autumn and Wintertime* (October through January). Major festivals of the Christian year (e.g. Holy Week) receive special attention with extra material. Following the Anglican/Episcopalian tradition, Tickle provides offices (set prayers) for each morning, noon, and evening plus compline for each week. The volumes (about 600 pages each) are beautifully produced with sturdy binding, cream-colored paper, two-color printing, and ribbon markers.

All scripture passages are printed in full so that everything necessary appears in one place. One of the most attractive features is that each part of the daily office is



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identified by a heading. Thus the morning office ("to be observed on the hour or half-hour between 6 and 9 a.m.") employs these headings:

- The call to prayer
- The request for [God's] presence
- The greeting
- The refrain [traditionally, antiphon] for the morning lessons
- A reading [scripture or other]
- The refrain
- The morning psalm [or part of a psalm]
- The refrain
- The small verse
- The Lord's Prayer
- The prayer appointed for the week
- The concluding prayer(s) of the church

As in the church's historic practice, morning's is the longest of the offices, but reading it through—even praying it aloud—takes scarcely ten minutes. The headings lead the worshiper through the prayer time, identifying the function of each of its parts.

Also in keeping with historic practice, honored resources appear such as the Magnificat, the Benedictus, the Apostles' Creed, the Doxology, and the ancient vesper hymn *Phos Hilaron*. Tickle casts her net more widely, however, including quotations and prayers from a host of authors, poets, and hymnwriters. Some of them are ancient or medieval (Augustine, Francis of Assisi, Thomas Aquinas, Catherine of Siena). Others are from the Reformation and forward (Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, Fanny Crosby). Most are known only through their hymn texts, but a few are noted masters in the field of literature (Gerard Manley Hopkins, Rainer Maria Rilke).

Tickle includes a hymn in each evening office, and here some problems arise. The question is whether and how much to alter older poetry in the interest of contemporary values. At times it is done with grace and care, but at other times the results are disappointing. Consider, for example, this mixture of terms for deity: "Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hides Thee,/ Though the eye of sinful man Your glory may not see." The pattern throughout seems to be to use You/Your for the nominative and genitive cases, with Thee employed for the accusative, especially for rhyme. But whatever the reason, the changes grate on the ear. The problem is compounded in the concluding stanza of the majestic hymn "Immortal, Invisible":

- All reigning in glory; all dwelling in light;
- Your angels adore you, while veiling their sight;
- All laud we would render: O help us to see
- It's only the splendor of light that blinds us from thee.

In this instance not only do the pronouns flipflop, but the last line's meter has been totally destroyed. Perhaps older poetry, by its nature, should be left unaltered as a work of art—but that is a debated literary issue. The volumes include an index of authors, but almost no one knows hymns by their authors. Therefore, an index of hymns by title and first line would improve future editions.



One final plus and minus: Tickle's "introduction to this manual" should be required reading before starting—especially the fine "brief history of fixed-hour prayer." But the history and the compendium are strictly Western; no attention is given to the heritage from the churches of the East. We still await a work of this large size and excellent caliber which will include and honor all the church of Christ worldwide.

Readers need not be daunted by the prospect of launching unprepared into the depths of fixed-hour prayer. Tickle and her publishers have provided two shorter books excerpted from the three volumes, *Christmastide: Prayers for Advent Through Epiphany* (2003) and *Easter tide: Prayers for Lent Through Easter* (2004). These 250-page paperbacks are ideal points of entry to the experience (and the discipline) of fixed-hour prayer. Readers are free, of course, to adapt any of this material to their own needs and wishes, but between the 3-volume magnum opus and the two briefer selections Tickle has provided everything needed. Taken all together, her work is a meal to sustain and a banquet to savor. This will be for the near future the most extensive introduction to fixed-hour prayer for readers (pray-ers) in the Western church.

Jerry R. Flora

Anne Cooper and Elsie A. Maxwell, ed., *Ishmael, My Brother: A Christian Introduction to Islam*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2003. 352 pp., paper, \$13.99.

If one is serious about the 9-11 causes and the Muslim faith in general, one might begin by reading *Ishmael, My Brother*. This definitive Christian introduction to Islam is built upon the premise that, in light of both 9-11 and the growing Muslim population in the USA, one must become cognizant of and conversant in Islam.

Muslims are at our doorstep today. They are with our children in school, with us in the workplace and as we participate in community activities. Every Christian should know what to say, how to use Friendship Evangelism, as well as to fully live one's faith so that Muslims will see Jesus in us and be irresistibly drawn to Jesus by the Spirit of God.

Unfortunately, through the centuries both Christians and Muslims have intentionally hurt each other. Both faiths have left an inexcusable polemic trail. In these days it is imperative that we both apologize and learn from each other in order to create acceptable paths that lead to peace. The editors say that "the aim of this book is to open up better understanding, encourage better relationships, and to press on toward better communication with our Muslim neighbors."

Most Muslims, including Islam scholars, have little idea of the contents of the Bible, the teachings of Christ, or the good news of salvation through Jesus, the Messiah. Muslims are discouraged by their leaders from reading the Bible or even touching the document! Other Christian literature receives the same treatment. Dialogue can be very helpful if BOTH sides do their homework first before setting out to discuss the truths and misunderstandings which lead to distrust.

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This book, first published in 1985, was updated in 1993 and 2003. The first two chapters of Part I begin by cursorily comparing Christianity with other faiths. This is followed by how to begin to make friends with Muslims where we work or live.

Part II leads the reader through the beliefs and practices of Islam, what they think, do, say, and hold dear as the ultimate truth. This complete analysis is ponderous at times but very important for the Christian to understand. Most seekers of dialogue must understand and work with a new vocabulary and nomenclature as they sift through the 1400 year story of Islamic faith.

Part III is more interesting as the author examines both Christian and Islamic cultural, historical, and political events. These chapters supply Christians with what they need to know about Islam as they deepen their friendships with Muslims.

Finally, the authors reveal in detail Islam in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, beginning with the loss of the Ottoman Empire after WW I, the cultural and economic weaknesses of Islamic nations, and the causes of the uprisings on a global scale by brain-washed militants and fundamentalists. The chapter ends with a strong call to prayer and action by Christians today.

As an "extra," this book gives the reader tools for further study as the book presents ten pages of bibliography on the subject of: general books on Islam, the Qu'ran; Mohammed the man; Islamic law; the Hadith (the vast collection of interpretations of Islamic Law); Islamic culture; history; women; sects; folk/popular Islam; apologetics; Islam in Britain. It also lists educational materials and websites of Christian and Muslim apologists.

These days every seminary student should consider ways to be trained to reach Muslims. We need not only "go into all the world." We have the exciting opportunity to do evangelism with Muslims who have come to us.

Three basic factors are necessary when a Muslim begins his faith journey to Jesus Christ:

- 1) A sincere and intentional friendship by the Christians.
- 2) Reading some portions of the Bible, especially the teachings of Jesus.
- 3) Experiencing some personal manifestation of God's power, such as a dream, visions, or healings.

Living together in America opens an amazing advantage for learning and listening. The extended family pressures are not as strong. The American principles of freedom of religion, speech, and worship are protected for all. On the whole, American Muslims speak English and are usually articulate, literate, skilled, and inquisitive as they enjoy the blessings of living in a free country. Add to this our own urgent and directed power in prayer for Muslims. Christians should express the grace and love of God as they lead others to Jesus, the model for living and the Savior from sin and death. We should keep the discussion focused on Jesus, not past history or the weaknesses of another's faith, or the present day politics, culture, past hurts, or our horrible historical scars.

We need to prepare a foundation where Jesus can lay solid stones of faith, inspiration, and commitment. How you live as a follower of Jesus among Muslim neighbors is one of the best forces for success.

Paul M. Musser, New Wilmington, PA

Robert Banks and Bernice M. Ledbetter, *Reviewing Leadership: A Christian Evaluation of Current Approaches*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004. 171 pp. paper, \$17.99.

Leadership is practical theology at the helm. The "theology" may be entirely secular or decidedly Christian. The concern of Banks and Ledbetter in *Reviewing Leadership*, is "...whether Christians' core convictions shape their views and practices of leadership or whether these are more affected by wider cultural assumptions" (16). Their evaluation grid is "only when the direction and the method are in line with God's purposes, character, and ways of operating that godly leadership takes place" (17).

The text in the first two chapters moves through from a broad interest in leadership today to biblical, historical and contemporary perspectives. The authors weave reviews and summaries of twenty authors and practitioners including Robert Heifetz, Gareth Morgan, Elliot Jacques, Janet Hagberg, and Warren Bennis. The biblical and historical material will be a great boost to doctoral students studying the field of leadership. The biblical material is a summary of Robert Banks' work on Paul and community. The historical perspective presents five theological models of leadership including Benedictine, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Quaker, and Pentecostal.

The next two chapters examine spiritual and faith-based approaches to leadership through thirty authors such as Stephen Covey, Stephen Pattison, Patricia Brown, David Baron, and Leighton Ford. The two chapters are an excellent "appetizer" of spiritual and faith-based leadership. For the novice, it is a place to begin an in-depth study. For the expert, it is an opportunity to sharpen the skills of mental debate. The review of Robert Clinton's work in terms of time analysis, process items, and patterns of response is especially helpful. Again, for the student choosing to master the field of Christian leadership, these chapters are a gold mine of references and further study.

It is only when the reader comes to chapter five that the book's promise, a lens for evaluating leadership, is presented. The theological base is a more holistic leadership, bringing together imagination and management, emotion and intelligence, around the concept of character. The three key aspects of character discussed by the authors are faithfulness (with respect to mission, promises, mistakes and loyalty), integrity (in this section, Banks' piece on the role of compromise is fuel for discussion in any M.Div. class), and service (a discussion of their critique of Greenleaf would benefit every pastor). The final chapter presents Christian leadership in action through case studies of Frank Buchman, Kierkegaard, Janet Hagberg, and Gordon Crosby.

The authors conclude that Jesus is the "ultimate role model not only for life but for leadership" (111). This statement will and does receive applause. But, I have dealt with enough leaders with a "messiah-complex" that I prefer to think of Jesus as the Ultimate Leader, and the source of the grace and truth that flows through needed, yet



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always inadequate, human leadership. This seems to be the conclusion of Banks and Ledbetter who write,

Leadership is about who a person is before and alongside what he or she does. It grows out of personal wholeness... Only by processing can people avoid the intrusion and the effects of the shadow side of leadership... becoming a genuine person. ...it is about follower-ship before it is about leadership. It is only through the gift of the cross of Jesus' life and the gift of the Spirit that people have any chance of developing into the kinds of people who have the capacity to serve and therefore lead others well (112).

A major gap in the review and the book is hinted at in this statement above: "developing into the kinds" of leaders who serve with faithfulness and integrity. The issue of leadership development is left out. Robert Clinton's work is cited, but what are missing are McClelland's competency development, De Vries' psycho-analytic approach to leadership, and the excellent developmental theories of Fisher and Tobert among others. The book focuses more on a description of leadership rather than its development. Yet, there is a spiritual truth in leadership; *as I lead, I change*. Guiding the lifelong process of leadership development shapes the "direction and the methods" (11) of leadership.

Finally, the purpose of leadership seems to be lost in the quest for theological evaluations. Yes, leaders must be men and women of faithfulness, integrity, and service. But, the purpose of leadership is transformation. "Leaders bring about change" (17). Godly leaders are faithful to the change God is bringing about. Godly leaders serve others in the process of embracing and adapting to change. And leaders demonstrate integrity by experiencing personal transformation as a prerequisite to leading change.

Richard Leslie Parrott, *Seize Your Life, Inc.*

Timothy Fuller, ed. *Leading and Leadership*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2000. 250 pp., paper, \$15.00.

Is anything so needed as reconciling the rift between leadership and ethics? In the simplest terms, leadership is *influence* and ethics involves *rightness*. To influence rightly is the challenge of leaders in every sphere. The works of Covey, Greenleaf, Burns, Bennis, Block, DePree, McGregor, Palmer, O'Toole, Blanchard, and Gardner are some of the contemporary authors that speak to the issue of influencing rightly. Yet, the discussion of ethical leadership is as old as humanity. What is the right way for leaders to influence followers? This has been debated by princes, poets, prophets, and preachers.

Timothy Fuller, working with the "Ethics and Everyday Life" project, has collected writings on leadership by classic authors from antiquity to modern times. The selections seek to cultivate a reflective discussion of leadership with practical consideration of human values. Fuller explains, "The aim of this anthology of readings is to foster discussion of what we can learn about leadership from the reflections of major



thinkers of past and present" (4). He challenges the reader with a story that he has learned to "keep close by at all times".

Epictetus (50-130) was a freed Greek slave who lived much of his life in exile from Rome. His life was simple and unadorned, and he displayed a 'sweetness' of character coupled with religious / moral intensity. He became one of the most famous exponents of Stoicism, combining a powerful aspiration to live a virtuous life with the attainment of serenity before the ceaseless flow of fortune and misfortune encompassing human existence.

He believed in rigorous self examination and in accepting full responsibility for one's actions, cultivating total internal independence while bowing to the external, unavoidable trials of life. He was not a political activist, but he became a great moral and spiritual leader, and his thought, as recorded by his students, has remained a perennial guide.

Epictetus emphasized the acceptance of convention and law; at the same time he sought the independence of mind and habit characteristic of one who is a citizen of the universe, of the invisible community of reflective people.

If one's providential dispensation is to find oneself in a position of leadership, according to Epictetus, one should not shrink from its attendant duties (one should be dutiful, even patriotic). However, one should cultivate detachment, not define one's self-understanding by the temporal flow of social life, its fashion and trends, its perils and temptations. The cultivation of strong character, not a checklist of tasks completed or not completed, was central for Epictetus.

Reflecting on the nature of leading and being led is the outcome of reading *Leading and Leadership*. The first section, "Classical Horizons," looks at leadership before the dawn of the democratic spirit, the modern belief of continual improvement, and the paradigm of creating one's personal destiny. The readings include passages from Confucius, Lao-tzu, Plato, Cicero, Francis Bacon, and the poets Shelly and Keats. The section concludes with the writing of the German political realist, Hans Morgenthau on love and power.

The second section of the collection deals with the highest levels of leadership, "On Greatness and the Heroic." The writings are from St. Thomas Aquinas, Machiavelli, Hegel, and Burchhardt. The opening piece is the wrathful speech of Achilles' from Homer's, *Iliad*. The line that every leader understands when the weight of office is heavy,

"For as to her un-winged young ones, the mother bird brings back morsels, whenever she can find them but as for herself it is suffering,

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such was I, as I lay through all the many nights unsleeping, such as I wore through the bloody days of the fighting, striving with warriors for the sake of these..."

The remainder of the book presents classical political figures including Washington and Lincoln as well as political theologians Kierkegaard and Martin Luther King, Jr. The book is the product of a political scientist, Timothy Fuller's field of study. Readings in political leadership can lead to critique of institutions, political processes, and highly visible leaders. This is a valuable discussion, but would miss the deeper point of this book, self-examination. Careful discipline of thought and intention will result in personal leadership development through reading and discussing the writings in *Leading and Leadership*.

Richard Leslie Parrott

Michael Jenkins and Deborah Bradshaw Jenkins, *The Character of Leadership: Political Realism and Public Virtue in Nonprofit Organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1998. 224 pp., cloth, \$22.95.

"What would it mean for leaders to concentrate on how things actually work in their organizations rather than basing their decisions and strategies on how things ought to work?" This is the basic question Jenkins and Jenkins seek to answer in *The Character of Leadership*. If there is one book on leadership I would ask a pastor to read after completing the first decade of ministry, it would be this book. Overcoming the three barriers to effective leadership, idealism (not ideals), the quest for utopian institutions, and naïve optimism, opens the door to realistic, and thus effective, leadership.

The book invites the reader to learn from experience. Culling lessons from Machiavelli's training of the Renaissance prince, Jenkins and Jenkins question the well-established patterns of thought and actions that may not have served the leader particularly well. "Many people, for example, work in leadership for thirty years and have essentially the same three years' experience ten times over because they have never learned the discipline of critical reflection on experience" (xi). Using a "hermeneutic of suspicion" that creates a healthy skepticism, leaders learn to ask questions such as: Whose story am I hearing? Why are they telling me this story now? Whose interest is served by this version of the story?

The second part of the book looks at the culture of the organization, and how to position the organization for change in a rapidly changing world. Developing a "sense of smell" for what is going on and how things really work is essential to effective leadership. The distinction between a Principality and a Republic (chapter 7) is one I have presented to scores of pastors who find that they quickly gain insight into congregations that heretofore had appeared baffling and ambiguous. Power and its use are central to leadership and organizational culture and virtue:

The frequent discussions in leadership periodicals about "the leader's vision" and "the leader's professional competence" may only cloud the issue of what it means to lead a specific organization whose

culture accepts, tolerates, desires, and rewards an entire range of behaviors and attitudes that make it difficult for any given leader to lead in a manner consistent with his or her values. (86)

An organization's health is directly related to its corporate virtue. When the corporate virtue is strong, leadership can be exercised with grace and effectiveness. When the corporate virtue is lacking, "leadership will be almost impossible" (92).

The leader also faces a challenge of virtue:

The leader's task of identifying with the group's culture is often tinged with a subversive spirit. The leader—in order to allow the group to grow and to change, that is, to grow beyond the boundaries of its comfort, maybe even to change in ways that will eventually call into question its identity and its mission—must be accepted as a significant representative of the group's culture. But—the leader also represents the culture in order to re-present the culture. The leader becomes identified, in some sense, as an official bearer of the culture's folkways so as to allow room for the group to be transformed, as every group must be transformed to some extent if it is to meet the vagaries and shifts of contemporary life and the changing needs of those whom the organization seeks to serve. This can place the leader in a moral dilemma" (93).

The leader must nurture the character needed for realistic leadership (part three). Jinkins and Jinkins identify these virtues as integrity, courage, flexibility, talent, and prudence. A foundation of leadership virtue is formed as the leader wrestles with the question: "How would I behave as a leader in the organization if the organization's purpose had a higher claim on me than my own comfort and security" (118)?

Out of reflective learning, understanding organizational culture, and nurturing leadership character, the development of realistic skills emerges. Networking, team building, strategic thinking, financial accountability, and dealing with sabotage and opposition are each given a chapter in the closing section of the book.

I highly recommend this book to every pastor and every leader of a non-profit organization. Every academic and government leader will find lessons a plenty. You will not like all you read. You will find yourself tormented on some pages, comforted on others, and challenged always. On a personal note, Michael Jinkins, a man I deeply admire, whose counsel I have sought and followed, is a man with a gentle spirit who seeks to help you think deeply, feel passionately, and act with authenticity.

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